

To Harry Mills

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Pearson Newcomb



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THE ALAMO CITY

BY

PEARSON NEWCOMB

DEDICATED TO

HARRY HERTZBERG

MY GOOD FRIEND

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FOREWORD

WERE I to tell the story of San Antonio, "The Alamo City," in its entirety, it would be necessary to advert to the discovery and settlement of the New World as they affected the territory of the Southwest, to give an account of the founding of the Texas Franciscan Missions, and to refer to the struggle of Mexico in freeing itself from Spanish rule.

Of even more importance to full treatment of the theme would be a review of the Anglo-American settlement of Texas and the successful outcome of the pioneers' enterprise in achieving their independence through the sacrifice of their heroes at the immortal Alamo and on other hallowed ground.

In the plan of this sketch, however, it has been my object not to narrate the history of San Antonio but rather to depict briefly its growth from a Spanish settlement: to tell something of its life and its people, its vanishing landmarks and customs, its progress and transformation to a great modern city—one of the first, if not superior to all others, in America, in the absorbing interest of its history, in strategic importance and delightful climate.

PEARSON NEWCOMB.

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THE ALAMO CITY

CHAPTER I

1718-1865

OLD SAN ANTONIO

TO the Tejas Indians may be accorded the credit of being the first settlers of San Antonio; for, as tradition goes, a tribe of these Indians had pitched their little wigwam village there long before the Spanish came to build a permanent settlement.

This Indian village became a camping ground for the early travelers who followed a trail blazed through the wilderness of Texas from the Mexican outposts on the Rio Grande to Louisiana. Conspicuous among those early travelers was the French knight-errant, Saint Dennis, who in 1714 made an attempt to establish trade relations between Louisiana and Mexico. On his way he made friends with the Indians and camped near the head waters of the San Antonio River. Here he drank of the crystal springs that were to lure

him, like many another intrepid adventurer, to return and taste of their magic again.

Though Father Mazanet (who had accompanied a Spanish expedition, under De Leon, in a search for La Salle's settlement in Texas) had built a small chapel and set up a cross on the site of San Antonio in 1690, St. Dennis is accredited with having had the vision to select the place as an ideal spot upon which to found a permanent community.

FOUNDING OF SAN ANTONIO

The natural charms of the site of San Antonio, its beautiful, winding stream (known then as the San Antonio de Padua) fringed by graceful trees, its numerous flowing springs, its hilltops and lovely valleys, had been sung by Saint Dennis and other appreciative knights who had traveled the lonely trail of the King's Highway. Recalling such praise, and realizing the necessity of establishing permanent settlements in Texas so as to thwart the encroachments of the French, the Spaniards were attracted and established there (1718) the Royal Presidio of San Antonio de Bejar. This presidio constituted a square, known then as the "Plaza de Armas" (Plaza of Arms). As

in other undertakings of those days, years were required for the building of the old stone houses that comprised the Commander's headquarters, the barracks, the prison and the fortress about the plaza. The plaza served as the first parade grounds in Texas for Spanish troops.

Coincident with the establishment of this presidio, the mission of San Antonio de Valero (later known as the Alamo) was established nearby.

The building of this presidio and mission in 1718 constituted the actual founding of San Antonio. It was followed closely by the building of the other missions of the San Antonio group and by the arrival, in 1730, of sixteen families from the Canary Islands who settled around a square, called Plaza de las Yslas, that adjoined the Presidio de Bejar.

This settlement became known as the Villa of San Fernando and formed a nucleus about which San Antonio was gradually developed. Here, then, bloomed the fairest flower that civilization had planted on Texas soil.

Engineer, architect, sculptor, mechanic, friar, soldier, Castilian, savage, all devoted

themselves purposefully to the work of settlement building, erecting structures whose solid walls and uplifted towers were destined to be mighty monuments along the highway of progress.

Notwithstanding the frequent forays of Apaches from the hills about Bandera Pass, some fifty miles north, this little colony, day by day, developed an increasing promise of permanence.

Nearly coincident with the time San Antonio was founded (1718), the city of New Orleans was begun. Detroit and Mobile had been founded only a few years before, and New York, titan of the cities of to-day, world of masonry and steel, vortex of humanity, universe of enthralling wonders, was yet in the swaddling clothes of its infancy.

SAN FERNANDO DE AUSTRIA

Closely following the founding of the Spanish colony the civil constitution of the settlement underwent a change. In 1734 the Villa of San Fernando and the Presidio de Bejar were jointly incorporated as the municipality of San Fernando de Austria, by

authority of a charter from the King of Spain. Thus San Antonio-to-be became, officially, a town.

THE SAN FERNANDO PARISH CHURCH

While San Fernando was in the course of advancement, the European colonists conceived the project of building a parish church, a place of worship more suitable than had been provided, for the religious needs and social dignity of the quaint but substantial little community that surrounded the Plaza de las Yslas. In announcing the enterprise, Prudencio Orobio de Basterra, Governor General of the province of Texas, published the following proclamation, Feb. 17, 1738:

“Considering that the room appropriated at the time of the erection of this Presidio for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and now used as a parish church, has no tabernacle, fount or other ornaments requisite for decorum in the Ministration of the Sacraments; therefore, in view of the representation to the effect laid before me by Padre Don Juan Rezio de Leon, Curate, Vicar, and Ecclesiastical Justice of the Town of San Fernando (outside this Presidio), I have resolved, jointly with the



THE SAN FERNANDO CHURCH

Justice and Town Council, for the better service of God, our Lord, the promotion of divine worship and public convenience, that a Parish Church shall be erected under the invocation of the Virgin of the Candelaria and Our Lady of Guadalupe, for whom this population professes a particular devotion."

Basterra was first to contribute to the building fund, his contribution being \$200.00. Others made smaller donations. The possible subscribers, however, were few, and relatively poor in worldly goods. Contributions in the form of a few bushels of corn, a pig, or a bull yearling were not uncommon; and it was by no means easy to convert such

collateral into cash or building material. After several months spent in unsuccessful efforts to secure adequate funds by local solicitation, the settlers submitted a memorial to the Governor and to the Archbishop of New Spain (Mexico).

In this appeal the villagers reviewed their need of a larger and better place of worship, their attempt to build it unaided by the Crown, and told of the obstacles that had brought their endeavor to naught. In conclusion they said:

“In view of the disabilities which circumscribe our efforts, we, therefore, beg that you exercise your office, that the Viceroy may be informed as promptly as possible of the disadvantages under which we labor, in order that he may extend to us some slight pecuniary assistance. By so doing he will serve both King and God.”

THE KING GRANTS RELIEF

Their prayer was answered. The money necessary to complete the church was provided by the royal treasury. The cornerstone was laid May 11th, 1738, and in 1749 the church and the old San Fernando Cemetery were blessed.

At about this time the population of San Fernando was increased by the arrival of fifty more families from the Canary Islands and a number of colonists from Mexico.

The town grew slowly during the era of missionary activity and the succeeding period of armed conflict, yet it maintained its rank as the most important point between Louisiana and Mexico. Then, with the advent of the nineteenth century and the Anglo-American, whose influence gave rise to a new era, significant events occurred to attract widespread attention to and affect the welfare and destiny of the Southwest.

Most important of these events were the battles waged in and near San Antonio, (1812-1821) during the struggle in which Mexico threw off the yoke of Spain and through the succeeding period (1835-1836) of the revolution in which the Texans, in turn, gained their freedom from Mexico.

During Mexico's struggle to free herself from Spanish control Texas became a place of refuge for those Mexicans who were opposed to monarchical rule. This resulted in San Antonio becoming a center of revolt and an

object of frequent attack. It was taken and occupied several times, alternately, by Revolutionists and Royalists.

After the Republican Revolutionary forces were defeated (in 1813), San Antonio was surrounded by Indians and cut off from all sources of supply. Privation became acute. A peck of corn cost \$3.50; one pound of sugar \$1.50; an ounce of tobacco, \$1.00. During 1814 the people were so desperately in want that, even at the risk of their lives, men ventured into the woods to gather herbs and to kill deer and other game to sustain their families.

At planting time there was not a horse in San Antonio. Squads of soldiers (fifteen to twenty) were sent afoot to the Leona to receive mail from Mexico. Farmers were obliged to move in parties, and, while in search of their oxen or at work in the fields, go armed. There were but few, if any, families, particularly among the poorer classes, from which one or more members had not been carried into captivity.

Time and again, dressed in the clothing of their victims, Indians promenaded the streets! In such dread did its inhabitants live, and so

fearful were their sufferings, that by 1816 San Antonio was well-nigh depopulated.

AN INTERVAL OF PEACE

The achievement of Mexican independence in 1821 brought peace to the Texas colonists.

This interval of peace proved to be short-lived, however, for San Antonio soon became a storm center in the conflict between Texas and Mexico that was marked (1835) by the storming of San Antonio de Bexar, followed in 1836 by the siege and fall of the Alamo.

Of but little less significance than these events of Texas history and rivaling them in romantic interest are the incidents and changes that mark the course of San Antonio's progress from frontier village to modern metropolis.

It is distinctive among the cities of the world, present and past, as one of the few predestined to greatness.

At intervals remote in place and time there coincide in certain geographical locations, the circumstances of natural conditions that promote the founding of a great metropolis and of social motives that combine with those

conditions to produce a city which becomes the supreme symbol of a master phase of civilization. In the chronicles of less than two score of cities so predestined and developed throughout six thousand years may be found the history of mankind. In each of them there is (or has been) embodied and crystallized the genius and achievement of the sponsoring culture, race, and soil. Water and land and sun, the fruits of these, and man combine to make such cities great; and time and event give sanction to the enterprise.

This concept of San Antonio and its destiny has been the dominant urge of its builders and defenders from the beginning. The heroic band that Travis commanded within the Alamo could have withdrawn from the position in ample time for battle in the open or for strategic retreat. Either course might have been followed without discredit. But counsels of higher wisdom and motives more exalted than those of the attacking enemy prompted the Texans to remain and fight for the Alamo and San Antonio.

It was an important fortress to defend and a town worthy to hold. Here the hand of

nature had marked off an ideal spot—a commanding site for a real city.

The same traits of patriotism, courage and fortitude exhibited by the defenders of the Alamo were displayed by San Antonio's early city builders in the maintenance of their settlement; for, none but the brave and self-sacrificing would dare the dangers of the wilderness and cast their lot where lawlessness reigned, where hardship and poverty prevailed, and where the establishment of order and industry was as difficult as it was necessary for the existence of society.

San Antonio's pioneer citizens were of serious mind, of a sternly resolute character that fitted them to lay the foundations upon which a splendid municipality would be reared. Their plan and preparation made almost inevitable the imposing hostelrys, modern office buildings, mercantile establishments and public institutions that have arisen against a historic background like a mirage upon a desert.

Were we to imagine ourselves reading the lines upon the palm of Old San Antonio's hand we would find that the "life-line" really began

with the town charter granted by the Republic of Texas in 1837; for, notwithstanding that its origin dates to 1718, the settlement was forced not only to fight for its life on occasion but also to continue an almost uninterrupted struggle for existence until the establishment of the republic.

With the granting of the town charter municipal affairs were reorganized under the aldermanic form of government in keeping with the more progressive communities.

The first town council enacted such ordinances as it deemed would safeguard and befit the proper administration and dignity of this new American municipality. One of these regulations decreed that the age-old bell-cow would no longer be permitted to roam at will upon public thoroughfares. San Antonio, however, was far more in need of protection from without than from within her borders, since her citizens were constantly in fear of a surprise attack by hostile Indians or of an attempted reprisal by Mexico.

(Although the Texans had declared their independence and gained a decisive victory at the battle of San Jacinto, Mexico had not rec-

ognized Texas as a free republic or given up hope of subduing the Texans.)

In October, 1838 a mass meeting of citizens was called to devise a way to rid the town of undesirables. The inn keepers were requested to furnish the Mayor, John W. Smith, with lists of their guests and of frequenters of their resorts. (John W. Smith, the first American mayor of San Antonio, was the grandfather of John W. Tobin, the 1926 progressive, public spirited mayor of the Alamo city.)

Following this request the town council enacted an ordinance that all vagrants be ordered to leave. The vagrant of that period was of a far different type from the modern "hobo." Desperate criminals who were compelled to flee from the states found refuge in San Antonio until forced to move on. These wanderers came in such numbers that the town organized a vigilance committee and contrived its successful functioning.

Petty infractions of the law became few because they were made unpopular by punishment that fitted the crime. To steal a horse was a capital offense, as evidenced by the following verse "La Ley de Mondragon" ("The

Law of Mondragon"). This poem referred to a famous old hangman's tree that grew on Flores Street. Mondragon was a power in the community, his word was law, and the law, the "tree":

"A little tree once grew
In a street of San Antone,
That little tree we knew
As "La Ley de Mondragon."

Which in a street of flowers
Put forth no blossoms fair,
Yet by the holy powers
A ghastly fruit it bare.

Whose seeds were sudden death,
Whose stem a tight drawn rope
The vigilant saith,
"Well founded is the hope."

"That the law of Mondragon
All Texas will endorse
That here in San Antone
You must not steal a horse."

An invitation to leave San Antonio before sundown on an extended trip overland to Mexico was the severe but frequent order to lawless characters. This enforced journey involved a traverse of the long stretch of coun-

try between San Antonio and the Mexican border, infested with ferocious animals and hostile Indians. Furthermore, there were but few settlements to be found even along the beaten trail made by the Mexican armies that had invaded Texas.

THE COURT HOUSE FIGHT

The fears of the people of San Antonio for their continued security were well-founded. In the course of time both Indians and Mexicans came to and attacked the town.

In March 1840, a band of sixty-five Comanche Indians sent a delegation to San Antonio to treat with the people for the release and return of captives. A disagreement occurred and the conflict that ensued became known as the "Court House Fight." This was perhaps the most unusual "Court House Fight" ever waged; its title implies a contest of very different nature from the reality.

The Indians and the citizens met in the old town Court House that stood on the corner of Main Plaza and Market Street. When it was discovered by the citizens that the Indians had not brought all their captives, as had been

agreed upon, it was resolved to hold several warriors as hostages to insure performance of the pledge. No sooner was this purpose declared than an Indian war-whoop was raised and a pitched battle began in the hall. It extended to the street, with heavy loss and a complete rout of the Indians but at the cost of the lives of a number of citizens.

AFTER THE BATTLE

Dr. Weidemann, an eccentric character of old San Antonio, took an active part in the fight and, after the fray, collected several Indian bodies from which he proposed to obtain skeletons — a purpose that he had long cherished.

That night he boiled the bodies of the two Indians he had selected as the best specimens, until the flesh could be removed from the bones. He emptied the "Indian stew" into the acequia (ditch) which had been reserved for household purposes.

When this incident became known the town people held an indignation meeting. The doctor was arrested and brought to trial. Abuse was heaped upon him but he took it calmly, assured the good people that the

Indians had passed on in the night, paid his fine and departed with a courteous bow.

LAMAR'S VISIT

Even the forays of the Indians, however—and these continued for some time—did not deter the residents of San Antonio from social enjoyment. In June, 1840, the President of Texas, Mirabeau B. Lamar, visited the community in state as the honor guest at a reception and ball. This gay affair took place in the commodious Yturri home, decorated for the occasion with flags and evergreens.

Mayor and Mrs. Juan N. Seguin led the grand march. The Texas President returned to the capitol much pleased with the cordial reception and enthusiastic over the hospitality of San Antonio.

This period of comparative peace lasted until the Mexican invasions under Vasquez and Woll. During these invasions nearly all American and many Spanish residents fled the city for safety. Some took with them all they possessed, while others left their effects, only to have them destroyed or appropriated by the invaders.

Mrs. Elizabeth M. Canterbury, the wife of an early merchant of San Antonio, was among them who fled and she referred to the period as a "terribly anxious time for the women."

The expeditions seriously disturbed the tranquillity of the old town. General Vasquez's invasion was barely more than a military march, because he made no effort to attack the settlements, but that of General Woll was productive of distressing results. After defeating, at the Salado Creek, a company of Texans unprepared for battle and greatly outnumbered, General Woll proceeded to San Antonio to sack the town. He confiscated merchandise and foodstuffs and destroyed or removed many old and important public records. One of the files removed contained the original boundary field notes of the town as set out in the Spanish grant.

General Woll did not tarry long in exploiting San Antonio, but left for Mexico before the Texas authorities could send armed aid to the defenseless town. He took with him fifty-two of its most prominent citizens, some of whom were held prisoners for nearly two years. Their release was secured by the American Embassy.



JOHN JAMES

This capture of San Antonio's citizens produced consternation and loss of the land records added to the confusion. The right and title of the town to its public domain was contested. People settled on vacant property where no protesting owner was on hand to drive them off. One man, James Goodman, alderman at the time, fenced even the center of Military Plaza and defied the authorities to dispossess him.

Finally Mr. John James, one of Old San Antonio's builders, was employed to straighten out the town's property lines. He was particularly fitted for the undertaking, as a surveyor of ability and familiar with the field notes of the original grant.

After the property lines had been re-established, the services of Judge Thos. J. Devine, another of San Antonio's pioneers, were retained to force the squatters to vacate the land

to which they were not legally entitled. This he did successfully, with the assistance of surveyor James. The result of their efforts, made through stubbornly contested litigation, was far reaching in that the title to a large area of San Antonio's most valuable property today is based on the court decisions secured by Judge Devine.

TEXAS ANNEXATION

Though order was finally established out of the chaos that followed General Woll's invasion of San Antonio, its inhabitants nevertheless heaved a deep sigh of relief when annexation to the United States was accomplished in 1845.

The character of these typical disturbances show that, even under the guardianship and guidance of the Texas Republic, San Antonio was in a merely convalescent stage of growth, recovering slowly from the effects of numerous conflicts while its people endured many privations and hardships. Although the citizens theoretically held title to the privileges afforded by a free constitution it was not until Uncle Sam opened his generous heart and took them under his protection that the in-



SOLEDAD STREET (1845)

habitants began to “live” as a civilized community and to enjoy the blessings of freedom.

Texas’ annexation by the United States resulted in war between the latter country and Mexico (1846-1848), during which period San Antonio served as an important military base for the United States Army.

At that time the town presented a quaintly interesting appearance. It was in reality an old Mexican pueblo with narrow, crooked streets like those of ancient Spanish towns. Thus it remained for years. Not a house or building stood east or north of the Alamo. This commanded an unobstructed view of the town, in the perspective of which the out-

standing features were San Fernando Church on Main Plaza, and an avenue, or Alameda, of noble cottonwood trees leading eastward from the old Alamo ditch.

PATRIOTISM WAS THE ORDER OF THE DAY

Love of country and genuine patriotic sentiment were evident in Old San Antonio. A typical manifestation of this fine spirit was the celebration July 4, 1846, of the anniversary of the Declaration of American Independence.

It had been an established custom among the Anglo-American residents to observe the day; but upon this occasion, with Texas now in the fold of the American Union, the entire citizenship turned out to welcome the glorious Fourth.

An old-fashioned barbecue took place under the great cottonwood trees then lining the Alameda (East Commerce Street), a barbecue characteristic of that period of San Antonio's history.

People came from all the surrounding country to join in the festivities and pay tribute to the Union founded by Washington and his compatriots.

There were "old time" horse races and all sorts of contests, foot and sack races, catching the greased pig and throwing horseshoes. Patriotic orators were there to review the splendid achievements of the Nation of which they had just become a part and to point with pride to the sacred walls of the Alamo.

Even though the savage still lurked about the settlements and there was need of constant vigilance, the people were content, and, under protection of the Stars and Stripes, relatively secure in the pursuit of happiness.

San Antonio has witnessed a return of many anniversaries of Independence Day since then and has seen some rousing celebrations, but it is doubtful if the participants of any of them have felt as keenly the significance of the occasion as did those rugged pioneers who gathered along the Alameda in 1846.

OLD SAN ANTONIO'S FOUR HUNDRED

With the exception of a few American families, the Spanish aristocracy, at this time, constituted the town's "Four Hundred." The Navarro, Menchaca, Seguin, De Zavala, Chavez, Yturri, Cassiano, Flores, Rodriguez, Garza, Ruiz, Perez and Urrutia families were



MAIN PLAZA (1846)

among the most prominent residents of the town. Through their veins coursed some of the best blood of Old Spain.

The everyday life of the townspeople was characterized to no little extent by the old Spanish customs of Mexico. From ten o'clock in the morning until four in the afternoon, the plazas were empty and all doors closed. After lunch, every one took a siesta (nap), then a bath, followed by the inevitable cup of coffee. As evening approached, men and women—many of the latter in elaborate toilets—were to be seen shopping or visiting.

Newcomers were afforded very primitive accommodations. The principal hotel was a

mere jacal (Mexican hut) typical of its kind, with flat roof, dirt floor, and barred windows. Nevertheless, many distinguished guests were sheltered within its walls: among them Prince Solms-Braunfels, founder of New Braunfels, Texas, Don Castro and several prominent officers of the United States Army, including Generals Doubleday and Kearney.

Hospitality uniformly prevailed in San Antonio's homes and a welcome awaited the "stranger within the gates."

The late Mrs. Amanda Jane Dignowity, one of Old San Antonio's noblest women, recalled, among her early guests, the names of Ex-Governor Yell of Arkansas, General Sam Houston, Archbishop Lamy, Bishop Odin and the Reverend Mark Anthony.

Mrs. Dignowity was a strikingly handsome young matron, tall, graceful, with oval face, fair complexion and blue eyes. She wore her hair in ringlets that framed her face like an aureole and gave her a girlish look. But, above all other charms, her exceedingly happy and gracious manner made her the ideal hostess and her presence in the sick room or amid scenes of bereavement verily an angelic visit-



MRS. DIGNOWITY

ation. Her husband, Dr. A. M. Dignowity, conducted a drug store, and Mrs. Dignowity was called upon and responded in numberless cases of illness. There is no way of knowing how many a bedside she visited, to how many stricken she ministered, nor how many cases of distress

were relieved by her without thought of reward save the happiness that repays service.

SAN ANTONIO'S FUTURE

Fate had decreed that San Antonio should not remain a Spanish village, and it was not long before the old town became a well-known landmark upon one of the highways leading toward the new El Dorado (California).

Many people believed San Antonio to be the "jumping-off place" of the Southwest, and in consequence, the town became a rendezvous for all types of adventurers. Little sympathy and assistance could be shown those who,

snagged on the reefs of misfortune, were thrown back bruised and bleeding—not that the people of San Antonio were heartless, but because they themselves were poor and their social organization rudimentary. The town, however, was destined to become a city of prosperous and happy homes, the sort of place that never lacks long for increase of population. Emigrants began coming from all quarters to cast their lot with the pioneers and to merit a share in San Antonio's destined prosperity.

THE FIRST PROTESTANT CHURCH

The social conditions that prevailed in 1846 encouraged religious activities. As a consequence, Protestantism gained a foothold.

The Rev. John McCullough, a Presbyterian minister, had visited San Antonio in 1842, shortly after the Mexican invasion under General Woll, at which time the town presented a discouragingly dilapidated appearance from having been sacked by the Mexican troops. Despite the unpromising prospect, Rev. McCullough resolved to re-visit the place and establish a Protestant foundation. When he returned in 1845, there were only a few Anglo-American residents, but he saw the



JOHN McCULLOUGH

increasing necessity of missionary work. As did the Franciscans, who had pioneered in religious endeavor in Texas for their faith, he appealed to the Board of Foreign Missions of his church in behalf of the establishment of a protestant mission in San Antonio.

Subsequently, in 1846, Rev. McCullough organized a Presbyterian congregation in San Antonio known as the First Presbyterian Church, and the building erected by them (1846) on Commerce Street was the first Protestant church built in the ancient town.

In the meantime Rev. John Wesley DeVilbiss, prominent in the annals of early Methodism in Texas, had visited San Antonio (1844). Upon a second visit, two years later, he organized the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Among the first members were Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Evans and their daughter, Augusta, who became a well-known authoress.

Although the Presbyterians were the first to build a Protestant church in San Antonio, the founders of both of these early congregations, daunted neither by danger nor the obstacles that confronted them, worked together in spreading the gospel in the old town.

It is said that occasionally these pioneer ministers held joint services in the early struggling days of their churches, and that, during these meetings, DeVilbiss preached while McCullough led the congregation in song and prayer: hence to each is due his meed of praise, for from such humble beginnings have sprung two of the largest and most influential churches of the Alamo City.

EDUCATION IN SAN ANTONIO

The question of education was a paramount local issue in 1846. From its founding San Antonio had been an educational center, in spite of the many disadvantages under which the friars and their successors, the Spanish and Mexican school masters, had labored.

As the town was for the most part Spanish it was but natural that the Spanish language should be given precedence in the teaching of San Antonio's early schools.

The record of the first curriculum teaching of English assigns it to McClure's private school and the year as 1828. Of this conjoint circumstance there is but a meager chronicle.

In 1839, J. H. Winchell, pioneer educator of San Antonio, taught "the three R's" in English in the first public class.

Realizing the advantages and the necessity of providing permanent equipment, with better facilities, Mayor Dwyer in 1844 urged the erection of a public school house. A committee, appointed to devise ways and means for the proposed building, recommended the construction of a new court house and jail and the conversion of the old court house, at the corner of Main Plaza and Market Street, into a school. Although the recommendations were approved, the plan was not carried out at the time.

In the meantime several private English schools had sprung up in the old town.

The old Presbyterian church building served also as a school house in which Rev. McCullough instructed a class. Later the Rev. Samuel Newton, who had been a missionary among the Osage Indians before coming to

San Antonio, and who was the first Sunday school superintendent of the Presbyterian church, took up the work begun by Rev. McCullough and continued the private school in the church building. Here the children of the old pioneer Protestant families of San Antonio recited their lessons in reading, writing and arithmetic, to the rhythm of a violin, which Mr. Newton played continually while carrying on his classes.

Another of these pioneer schools was that of Dr. Follingsby on Alamo Street. One of his distinguished pupils was Augusta Evans, who at the age of fourteen wrote "Inez of The Alamo."

These schools pioneered at a time in which many private schools came into existence and flourished.

SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST NEWSPAPER

With peace assured between Texas and Mexico by the annexation of Texas to the United States, there followed days of expansion and growth. The influx of new settlers brought new enterprises to the town. In 1848 San Antonio's first newspaper, "The Western Texan," appeared. It was published by the

firm of Lewis and Groesbeck, and although the life of the enterprise was comparatively short, it opened the local field of journalism.

ESTABLISHMENT OF UNITED STATES
MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

The prestige that accrued to San Antonio by annexation was manifested shortly there-



THE ALAMO (Under Uncle Sam)

after by the establishment of United States military headquarters in the town. Subsequently the Government leased the Alamo and used it as a quartermaster depot.

General William J. Worth, whom "Fort Worth," Texas commemorates, was then Com-

mander of the United States military establishment at San Antonio. He located a camp at the head of the river, the springs of which were named for him. His headquarters were maintained in the Plaza House, on the north side of Main Plaza, a noted hostelry in its day.

This was a period of civic, economic and social development and, except for an occasional street fight with the Indians, the serenity of conditions was disturbed only by the appearance of cholera in 1849.

A new year was well under way but there was naught to foretell the horrible tidings that were to strike terror into the hearts of her people so soon.

“CHOLERA HAS APPEARED IN NEW ORLEANS”

This was a headline in the “Western Texan,” April 16th, 1849, and the following poem appeared in that issue:

Arouse! Awake! the Cholera's come,
And bends its wrath on Christendom;

At distant Ganges' sacred stream,
It roused the Hindoo from his dream.

In spasms, struggling he awoke
To sink beneath the Conqueror's stroke.

Then orient Persia's sons of pride
Bowed low their haughty heads and died.

On rolled the Conqueror's car of fate,
O'er nations humbled and prostrate.

Before him yawned the opening tomb—
Behind was silence, death and gloom.

Through Russia's wilderness of snow,
It laid the prince and peasant low;

And Turkey's sons kneeled low in vain
At Allah's shrine, nor rose again.

Mohammed failed his sons to save—
They sank, all helpless, in the grave.

But now, his fearful, death-fraught car
Whose rumbling thunders from afar

We long have heard, rolls on our land
In awful gloom, terrific, grand!

In front, on the advancing cloud,
See Death, pale spectre, in his shroud;

Behold his outline in the sky;
His arm is raised—his shafts promiscuous fly!

But let him come, in triumph all elate,
'Tis to collect a debt we owe to fate,

And nothing more—a debt we all must pay
What matter then, tomorrow or today?

The first case of the pestilence made its appearance April 22d and, though others followed quickly, the disease was confined for two weeks to that portion of the Mexican population residing in low damp places. It soon spread, however, throughout the town and, being of the most virulent nature, it stubbornly resisted all measures to bring it under control.

A majority of the American residents fled the city and, like an unhappy mariner at the mercy of wave and wind, looked for "any port in a storm." Of them who remained large numbers died. Dr. Dignowity stayed with his family, as did the Mavericks and a few others; and the doctor established a temporary hospital to which were taken many persons who had fallen upon the streets.

Mrs. Samuel A. Maverick said that death claimed scores of victims daily. Nearly every house was invaded, and in most of them death left its summons. Awe of the dread contagion grew apace. Almost everyone began to feel "symptoms" and to anticipate that his turn would come next; even those who had fought Mexicans and Indians with never



GENERAL WORTH

a thought of fear, became terror-stricken at the havoc wrought by the unconquerable malady. Many drank heavily, some dying drunk. Others, entirely sober, were suddenly seized and fell dead. The plague lasted six weeks and more than five hundred persons

are known to have succumbed. At least one-third of the population, becoming panic-stricken, fled; and, although a number even of these perished, a majority escaped.

Among the victims were Thomas Newcomb, (who came to Texas from Nova Scotia in 1839) author of the poem describing the approach of the malady, and General Worth, a native of New York who had served gallantly in the war of 1812 and to whom Congress voted a sword for distinguished service at Monterrey during the conflict between the United States and Mexico. General Worth's remains were removed to New York where a monument was erected to his memory in Union Square.

When the pestilence subsided those who had left the town returned and life resumed its normal trend.

A NEW ERA

From this time onward "Old San Antonio" enjoyed a steady growth through an era of prosperity which was interrupted only for a short while at the outbreak of the Civil War

SAN ANTONIO IN 1850

Though there were yet thatched roof jacals here and there among the stone buildings in 1850, the town offered a more solid aspect of permanence and ambition.

The principal business houses and dwellings were scattered along picturesque old Commerce Street. This narrow thoroughfare made a steep incline to the crossing of the San Antonio River.

One can hardly imagine how the low wooden bridge, close to the water, could span the old stream; but so it served the people for years. The bridge was built in 1842, at which time the town council ordered that the proceeds of the sale of five certain lots in the business district, amounting to a total of five hundred



WEST COMMERCE STREET (1850)

(By Permission of E. Raba)

and fifty-five dollars, be turned over to the bridge contractor on account. In addition to this resolution the town fathers decreed further:

“1st. And it is carried and ordered that all voters shall be employed in filling up the hollow on the west side of the bridge;

“2nd. And every person having carts shall furnish them one day with yoke of oxen to haul dirt, and every lone man shall present himself, with a pick and spade, and report to Mr. Callaghan who shall credit him with the sum of \$1.00 for a cart and a pair of oxen and 50c for each lone man, the sum to be allowed

to their credit for the taxes to be assessed, and all owners of carts to furnish hides with their carts to haul either rubbish or dirt." These cowhides were placed to keep the contents from sifting or falling through the cracks in the bottom of the cart beds.

(The Mr. Callaghan referred to was the father of the later mayor, Bryan Callaghan.)

In those days cowhide was an important factor in Texas industry. Lariats, bridles, saddles, whips, chairs and many other articles were made from hides. Even cumbersome rafters were fastened together with strips of rawhide, which are known to have served this purpose for more than one hundred years.



THE MAVERICK HOMESTEAD, ALAMO PLAZA

The ancient plazas resembled more than anything else an Indian Village, and were useful especially as camping grounds for ox teams.

Alamo Plaza looked very much neglected. The Samuel Maverick homestead on the north corner of the plaza and a few one-story adobe buildings on the west side of the square constituted the measure of metropolitan development at that time.

Indians frequently paid unwelcome visits to Alamo Plaza or its vicinity, intimidating farm hands, especially the negro slaves, who were robbed of their teams.

Uncle Sam's soldiers were quartered about Military Plaza (the Plaza de Armas) from



AN OLD PAINTING OF MILITARY PLAZA (1850)



MAIN PLAZA (1850)

a tall flagstaff in whose center floated the inspiring folds of "Old Glory." Every day there was a military parade and a band entertained the populace with music. Much of the interesting history of San Antonio of that period concerns matters whose origin was either in this quaint old plaza or its immediate neighborhood.

Nearly all the commerce was concentrated on Main Plaza. It was the harbor to which all prairie schooners were piloted and from which they "sailed."

There were a number of two-story houses on this plaza, the hotel center of the town.

The Plaza House, built on the north side of the square, had a second story, as did the Cassiano residence, which stood on the southwest corner of the square and Dolorosa Street. The latter was a most pretentious edifice for that day. Later it became known as the Southern Hotel. On the south side of the square, nearly opposite the Cassiano residence, was the Leonard Garza building, of two stories. In 1850 it was well patronized as Mrs. Phillips' Hotel. General Brooks of the United States Army made his headquarters there. Lewis and Groesbeck's Store, a story and a half adobe building, stood on the square on a line with Market street. The elder Bryan Callaghan built a two-story stone building on the plaza, and Enoch Jones put up another at the corner of Market street.

In addition to the two-story buildings that flanked the square in part, there were many flat roofed low stone buildings with stone and wooden gutters projecting over the walls for the discharge of rain water. These extended north on Soledad street and up Acequia and North Flores to Salinas street. Alamo street continued south from Commerce street along

the river to La Villita, a village consisting largely of thatched roof dwellings, relics of the mission building period.

West of San Pedro creek there was a straggling line of primitive dwellings along Laredo street. Beyond the limited area of the town's improvements that clustered along the banks of the storied river, and with the exception of the irrigated fields above and below the settlement, a wilderness held sway.

THE TOWN GOVERNMENT

There was a well organized town government in 1850, with a Mayor and a representative board of aldermen.

J. M. Devine was mayor; Chas. Hummel, Samuel A. Maverick, Sam S. Smith, Wm. Lytle, Onesimus Evans, J. A. Urrutia, F. L. Paschal and A. A. Lockwood were aldermen. John Bowen was the treasurer; John C. Crawford, collector; Russell Howard and Edward Miles, secretaries. One or two policemen completed the civic organization. Dr. Devine (to whom reference has been made as mayor), a man of education and good business training, was the leading druggist.

Chas. Hummel had the first gun store and was the first German figure in the political affairs of the town.

Samuel A. Maverick, a generous, charitable gentleman, came to Texas from North Carolina. He was a scholar and a man of wealth; somewhat eccentric in his ways, but always kind and considerate. He invested largely in real estate, and no land was too wild or remote to interest him. At the time of his death he was reputed to be the largest land owner in the United States.

Samuel S. Smith, a native of Boston, came to San Antonio in 1837. He served as an alderman in 1847 and as a county and district clerk for many years. His son, Thad W. Smith who is one of the best informed men on matters appertaining to the life and people of Old San Antonio, succeeded his father as County Clerk and is still connected with the administration of that office.

Wm. Lytle, a sturdy citizen, was the village blacksmith. Onesimus Evans was a merchant who came from Arkansas. Urrutia was a prominent Mexican citizen. F. L. Paschal was a member of one of Old San Antonio's

first families. A. A. Lockwood, among the town's eminent merchants, came from New York. Later he served as a mayor. John Bowen, a man of strong character, was a physician. John C. Crawford hailed from old Kentucky. After his term as alderman he was sheriff of Bexar County for several years.

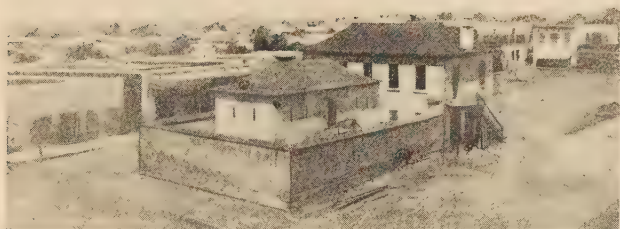
Russell Howard, a bright young attorney, was the brother of Volney E. Howard, who was the first representative in the United States Congress from the district known as Western Texas.

THE COURT HOUSE AND JAIL

The plan of erecting a new court house and jail, and the conversion of the old court house into a public school was finally consummated in 1850 under the administration of Mayor Devine. The development of public schools in San Antonio, however, was relatively slow.

The court house and a jail were built adjoining one another on Military Plaza, both two stories high, and in 1850 were the only two-story structures on the Plaza.

The prison building was enclosed in a high square of walls, on the top of which were em-



THE COURT HOUSE AND JAIL

bedded pieces of broken glass with blade-like edges. This prison housed some of the most desperate criminals that ventured West and several noted hangings took place therein.

The court house building became a roosting place for bats and quite commonly was known as the "Old Bat Cave."

SAN ANTONIO'S EARLY POST OFFICE

San Antonio's post office in 1850 was conducted by Mr. John Bowen, a public spirited citizen who volunteered his services without remuneration.

The post office building and Mr. Bowen's home were under the same roof. This primi-



THE OLD POST OFFICE

tive building was situated on "Calle Quinta" (Garden Street) known later as Dwyer Avenue. The old adobe housing, so unlike the fine Federal structure of today, was originally the home of the Curbelo family, who were among the first settlers from the Canary Islands. It served, for a time, as a barracks for Spanish soldiers and in 1813 was used as a prison in which a number of women were incarcerated and there they were forced to make tortillas and chili con carne as foodstuff for the Spanish troops.

There were no departments and neither postal clerks nor assistants other than Mr. Bowen's wife, who distributed the mail and

prepared the mail bags for the stage line that passed through San Antonio carrying the transcontinental mail to California.

The arrival of mail was not a daily affair, and was looked forward to as a "State Occasion." It required three months for mail from San Antonio to reach New York. It was carried overland to Indianola, thence by water to New Orleans. The trip up the Mississippi River, in the slow-going crafts of the time, was a tedious one, and if nothing untoward occurred enroute San Antonio received news from New York four times a year. A month was required to transport mail to San Diego.

The Western Texas State Company's line advertised a time table giving the time of departure and arrival of United States mail stages to and from Indianola, Yorktown, Victoria, Lavaca, Seguin, Gonzales and Austin and passenger tickets to Waco Village and Dallas, Texas.

In 1850 the entire population of the town numbered not more than five thousand, of which more than half were of Spanish or Mexican descent. These were the owners, while the Anglo-American and foreigners were

mostly tenants. A new tendency in ownership had set in, however, and the old Spanish proprietors were gradually supplanted.

Despite the prominence of the Spanish element, San Antonio, even at this early day, was cosmopolitan in character. Americans, French, Italians, and Germans drifted in from the colonies or came direct from the Fatherlands.

Good order was maintained and the tragedies credited to the town were traceable to transient sojourners, many of whom were fugitives from justice or adventurers given to gambling and drinking.

There was no unfriendly business competition and a spirit of hearty co-operation was in evidence everywhere.

The people lived well. They had plenty of good beef, turkeys and chickens. The San Antonio river and adjacent streams afforded an abundance of fish, and irrigable farms produced a variety and sufficiency of vegetables, peaches and figs. All kinds of delicacies purchasable in the New York markets were to be had in San Antonio at "Don Pelon's" big store. "Don Pelon" was the nickname given to Mr. Nat Lewis, Sr., a bighearted New Eng-

lander physically distinguished by a head completely bald. He was greatly beloved, especially by the Mexican population and through his generosity the word "pilon" became a significant word. Mr. Lewis gave his customers, especially the children, a stick of candy or a cookie with each purchase. The commodity so given in addition to the purchase was called "pilon," and the term, with its indicated practice, has become established in tradition. Aside from being a merchant, Mr. Lewis was then the cattle king of Texas. His herds grazed from the Medina River (a few miles from San Antonio) to the coast and he permitted poor immigrants and Mexicans to use his cattle as oxen and milk cows. It was said of him that, as a boy, he ran away from his old New England home "to go to sea," and hence was not so scholarly as his brother Henry M. Lewis, the lawyer. But, he knew how to conduct a big business.

The lack of modern conveniences was no bar to the comfortable management of life, even though the streets were unlighted, and those who went about on dark nights carried old-fashioned sperm oil lanterns or tallow dips.

Of the necessities of life, that most precious commodity, "water," was obtained from shallow wells or taken from the river, creeks, or springs.

Genuine good fellowship prevailed and many were the entertainments and gatherings in which the community participated with true democracy of spirit. Ball rooms were illuminated and merriment prevailed. The type and occasion of popular amusements were as varied as circumstances made possible; they consisted chiefly, however, of Sunday horse races, cock fights, fandangos (dances) and the celebration of Saints' Days.



MEXICAN DANCE (Painting by Grenet)

It is related as a typical case that an old Mexican shoemaker, whose shop faced the east side of Main Plaza, as a Sunday custom tied his fighting cocks on the sidewalk and, when services were over in the San Fernando church nearby, came out to join the others of his class in matching for fights under the very shadow of the belfry.

It was quite in character with the origin of the town and its development since it had been Catholic from the beginning and derived its name from its patron, Saint Anthony of Padua, that the celebrations of the Saints' Days should feature its history. The establishment and progress of these celebrations contribute to a quaintly interesting record.

In 1755 the Chief Justice, Captain Thorivio de Urrutia, with the Cure and the Vicar and Bachelor Don Juan Ignacio de Cardenas y Ramos of the Villa of San Fernando (San Antonio) made a solemn vow to observe annual festivities in honor of Saint Ferdinand and the Holy Virgin.

The original signed vow was lost but later, in 1775, the vow was reaffirmed. In this reaffirmation it was agreed that the people of

San Fernando should continue to celebrate the Saints Days with festivities. The days designated were December 8th, the Immaculate Conception; December 12th, Our Lady Guadalupe, the Patron Saint of Mexico; February 2d, Candelaria, or Purification; and June 13th, Saint Anthony. Little is known about the early celebrations, in the 18th Century, other than the record of captains and teams being appointed to raise the money necessary to defray the expense of the occasions, very much as they are in this day. In 1850, however, the principal festivity began on St. John's day, June 24th, and lasted until St. Peter and St. Paul's day, June 29th (a period of observance added to the days originally prescribed). This celebration signalized the opening of the fruit and vegetable season, when apples, melons, sweet corn, and pumpkins were in the market; and, the more plentiful the crop, the larger the scope of the celebration. Each day's festivities began in the early morning with religious ceremonies in the Catholic churches. In the afternoons there were horse races, cock fights and other similar amusements, and each night a grand ball was held. The cock fights and horse races



OLD MILL CROSSING

took place in the Mexican quarter, which was commonly called "Laredito," little Laredo.

SAN ANTONIO'S RIVER

The San Antonio River was a popular swimming and bathing resort, and daily as the summer sun sank below the horizon this "sweet western stream" was the scene of sports and health-making pastimes of a friendly, contented people.

An old bathing beach at the Lewis grist mill continued to be a bathing spot and watering place for more than fifty years. It was the principal ford of the river, and remained so even after the river was bridged. Until the

advent of the automobile it was a regular meeting place of the townspeople who drove through the river to water their horses and at the same time to wash their vehicles, or to tighten the steel tires by the swelling process. Incidentally the boys would take this opportunity for a plunge in the river, using the buggies or wagons for diving boards. Many young negroes would frequent the ford and worked up a lucrative business in washing the carriages of San Antonio's aristocracy.

CHRISTMAS IN SAN ANTONIO IN 1850

With the approach of Christmas the people of San Antonio made preparations to observe that most sacred day as a day of rejoicing, just as all Christian people have done since nineteen centuries ago when a celestial star shone radiantly over the Holy Land as it beckoned the shepherds to behold the Infant Savior. A feature of San Antonio's observance of this great event in 1850 was the production according to old customs of Los Pastores and Las Posadas.

Rome, Greece, Spain, France, Germany, and England all have had their "Miracle"

plays in one form or another, and among those that survive is the relic of Old Spain, "Los Pastores de Belen," the creation of her talented Lope de Vega, the Shakespeare of his country. Los Pastores, a mediaeval drama, was introduced in North America by the missionaries who accompanied Hernando Cortez on his conquest of Mexico in 1519. Thereafter it became a traditional institution of the Aztecs. Finally, during the early Texas mission days it appeared in San Antonio under the direction of the pioneer friar, Fray Antonio Margil, with the converted Indians as actors.

Because of long perpetuated mission traditions about San Antonio it is not strange that the performance at Christmas in 1850 retained many of the characteristics of the early portrayals. Its primitive style has been somewhat modified since.

In this unique play the actors propose in dramatic form the story of the nativity of Christ as seen through the eyes of the shepherds of Bethlehem.

A feature is the struggle between the powers of good and evil as represented by the archangel Michael and by Lucifer and his seven

devils, symbolic of the seven deadly sins. The struggle between these two resolves itself in a dreadful contest in which, although conquered, Lucifer is the sort of hero that Milton has painted him in "Paradise Lost."

Similar to the Passion Play at Oberammergau, Los Pastores, with some innovations, has ever been replete with interest for both participants and spectators, and it has been celebrated at Christmas time, year after year, to the present day.

San Antonio experienced cold, cloudy, drizzly weather during Christmas time in 1850. A light rain had fallen for days, so that the roads to the country and the world beyond were almost impassable. Water stood in pools over the plazas, unimproved and unbeautified. But the wet weather did not depress the buoyant young people of old San Antonio who were bent upon merrymaking; nor did it interfere materially with the usual religious observances of the season.

LAS POSADAS

The celebration of Las Posadas precedes that of Los Pastores and represents the nine



THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

days of wandering of Blessed Virgin Mary and her spouse, Saint Joseph, in search of shelter in Bethlehem just before the birth of the Infant Savior.

Nine days before the great holiday, in obedience to an old and beautiful custom, many of the residents of San Antonio hung out lanterns above their doors until Christmas, thus commemorating the pilgrimage of the Holy Family to Bethlehem. This custom, like that of Los Pastores, is still observed by many, both in and about San Antonio, each year.

APPLE WAGONS ARRIVE

The day before Christmas 1850 was made memorable by the arrival of three wagons loaded with apples. The apple merchants had driven all the way from Arkansas to reach San Antonio, the best market in Texas. Their covered wagons, bearing a precious cargo, more fragrant than spices of the Orient to the inhabitants of San Antonio, had no need to advertise; the air became perfumed along the streets traversed and young and old followed the carriers until they halted to peddle their cargo at ten cents an apple. But what apples they were! The sight of them carried many an old Yank back to the stony hillsides of New England.

Yuletide was ushered in with as much noise as the ringing of bells, firing of anvils and small guns, in the hands of juveniles, could make. Great bonfires made from tar barrels illuminated Main Plaza and cast a brilliant glare over the old town. Christmas morning found a happy people, and "Christmas Gift" was the greeting with which each tried to forestall the other. There were none extremely poor, none who did not have shelter, clothing and food.

Those were halcyon days! The people were not obsessed by a mania for money-getting; real estate booms were unknown; controversies of any sort were rare, and a true communion of interests prevailed.

A NEW ERA

From the year 1850 San Antonio began to take on a more definite civic character. Substantial business and public buildings were erected and fine homes were built.

San Antonio had two public schools in 1851 with three teachers and less than one hundred pupils. The school in which the girls were taught was located on Military Plaza, while that for boys was on Alamo Plaza. Evidently, co-education was not popular with the Town Fathers of that time.

THE FIRST BOARDING SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

The Ursuline Academy founded in 1851 has the distinction of being the first boarding school for girls in San Antonio and the second oldest in Texas.

While making a pastoral visit to San Antonio in 1851, Bishop Odin was convinced of



THE URSULINE CONVENT

the need of a local school for girls. He purchased a spacious stone house that had been built as a residence by a certain Frenchman, and abandoned by him when his wife refused to leave Europe for a new home in the struggling western settlement. Bishop Odin appealed to the old Ursuline Convent at New Orleans for Sisters and these were promptly offered for the conduct of the school.

The party of Sisters who volunteered for this mission left New Orleans September 7th, 1851, and, after a three days voyage by water, arrived in Galveston, from which place they were accompanied to San Antonio by Father Dubuis, the parish priest of Castroville, Texas.



MRS. EAGAR

The journey to San Antonio by stage was a trying one. Shortly after leaving Galveston a fearful storm was encountered and the travelers were forced to leave the coach and seek shelter in a poor hut beside the road. When the storm was over they resumed a journey made

endurable only by the prospect of reaching their destination soon. They arrived in San Antonio at night and took possession of their new domicile lighted only by the rays of the moon shining through windows that had neither panes nor blinds.

This "haven of rest" for the tired travelers was unfurnished and infested with spiders and scorpions. The Sisters set out to make it habitable and the deserted house that had been spurned by a haughty wife was soon converted into a comfortable abode and commodious school for old San Antonio's school girls and young women. Many a matron to-day remembers the old place with affection.

Mrs. Sarah E. Eagar, a charming old resident of San Antonio, one of the first Anglo-American children born in the town, was among the first pupils of the Ursuline Convent and cherishes delightfully pleasant recollections of her early school days under the thoughtful guidance of the Sisters.

In May, 1852, the St. Mary's Catholic School, later known as St. Mary's College, and more recently as St. Mary's Academy, was established on the west side of Military Plaza. It was re-established in 1853 at its present location on College Street. Throughout nearly seventy-five years of educational and religious



ST. MARY'S COLLEGE

endeavor it numbers among its alumni some of the most prominent men of San Antonio and Southwest Texas.

In 1852 the St. Mary's Catholic Church purchased a site adjoining the college, but the building (which has been replaced by a more pretentious church) was not built until 1855.

Coincident with the founding of the Ursuline Convent and St. Mary's College which have grown with the town and are still flourishing, the Methodist congregation, founded by Rev. DeVilbiss, erected a church building on



THE PAINE METHODIST CHURCH

Soledad Street. This church was known as the Paine Methodist Episcopal Church South, it having been named for the Methodist Bishop, Robert Paine. It served also as a private school building for many years and although considered up-to-date in its day, it was but a stepping-stone to the rise and growth of a large congregation.

Rivaling the early Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, and other educational efforts, in romance and importance, was the old German-English private school which was organized in the early fifties by the Casino Association, but absorbed later by the public schools.

SAN ANTONIO'S EARLY NEWSPAPERS

Additional newspapers sprang into existence. The publication, already mentioned, of the pioneer Western Texan was followed by that of the San Antonio Ledger, the San Antonio Texan, the Alamo Star and the San Antonio Herald.

The Alamo Star appeared in 1854. Its publisher, James P. Newcomb, was then a young man in his 'teens. He set his own type and ran his printing press by hand. This paper



JAMES P. NEWCOMB

was comparatively small, but it carried the great legend "Remember the Alamo."

In the issue of September ninth, 1854, the Star gave a report of San Antonio's first agricultural fair, from which account the following is quoted: "The Agricultural Fair was held at San Pedro

Springs last Wednesday and Thursday. Although it may not have compared in size with some of the county fairs of other states, it was, nevertheless, a splendid beginning and it can not be doubted but that a community so adapted to stock-raising, agriculture and varied enterprises will take the lead."

All of the good old folks who participated in San Antonio's first fair have passed away. Among the exhibitors were Dr. George Cupples, a prominent physician; a Mr. Gardner, an industrious farmer; W. H. Jackson, the first stockman to import Durham cattle to

Bexar County; Captain J. H. Beck, who operated a farm on Alamo Street and had the first Sea Island cotton grown in the vicinity; and Mrs. Tunstall, who made the best butter. The firm of J. G. and David Bell, pioneer jewelers, provided prizes for the successful contestants. These exhibitors were some of the town builders of the early days.

The newspapers had a hard time gathering news, as news (that is, such items as fill the columns of modern newspapers) was scarce.

The Alamo Star devoted most of its space to the doings of San Antonio's younger set. These items appeared in the issue of October ninth, 1854:

"The Youths Debating Club held forth on the night of October sixth. The Histrionics offered a diversified program of entertainment last week. On Saturday night, "The Follies of a Night" and "Love in Humble Life," were presented to a crowded house. The part of 'Duchess de Chartress' in the first piece was played by Miss Adah Theodore, whose fine impersonation of this beautiful part very quickly won for her the admiration of our highly appreciative theater-going public."

(Miss Theodore, whose real name was Fuertes, became known in Europe and America later as Adah Isaacs Menken. In 1853, she became famous in England in the role of Mazeppa.)

"On Friday evening the Vauxhall Garden, an old rendezvous of the pleasure-seeking Germans, was enlivened by a scene not uncommon. Our Teutonic friends had a private ball there and from the illuminations and splendid music, it must have been a joyous affair. In another quarter of the town the strains of Spanish airs and merry voices burst forth. It was a surprise party at the home of Mr. Navarro and there reigned supremely the fair, gay dancing daughters of old Castile."

In the issue of December fourth the Star commented on the crowding of the streets, as usual, with wagons and ox carts and on the town being in a perfect bustle, with business brisk and the hotels full of strangers. The same issue reported a pursuit of Indians:

"We learn from a gentleman just in from the head of the Limpia that Indians have committed depredations lately in that vicinity and that a large force of regulars is in pursuit.

“Captain Walker, after returning from San Saba, made a reconnoissance at the head of the Guadalupe River. He encountered a party of Indians — killed several and recaptured nineteen American horses.

“Captain Travis (the son of Travis of Alamo fame) returned from his scouting trip eight days ago without having discovered any Indians in the vicinity of San Antonio.”

THANKSGIVING IN SAN ANTONIO IN 1854

As reported in the “Star,” Thanksgiving Day in 1854 was observed quietly but impressively. Merchants closed their stores and everyone seemed to realize the solemnity proper to the day. Old fashioned turkey dinners were served and prayers ascended from the humble home circles, thanking God for the blessings He had bestowed upon them. But no churches were open for divine worship, no pealing organs or chanting choirs sent forth anthems of praise. The people of Old San Antonio were thankful for all their blessings and they had much for which to be thankful, in so remote a settlement—much to remind them of a Creator thoughtful and kind.

A PIONEER DRUG STORE

One of these blessings was a real drug store. It was conducted by Dr. A. Nette, a pioneer apothecary of the old school, who came to Texas in 1845 with a colony of German immigrants under the leadership of Prince Solms-Braunfels.

Dr. Nette was not only a druggist but a practitioner as well, and made his professional calls on horseback over a large area surrounding San Antonio. Among his early patients were many of the Indians whom he visited in their little villages and with whose chiefs he smoked peace pipes and became a friend. The noted old Comanche Chief, Geronimo, was particularly attached to the doctor.

The Indians would frequent the store on Commerce Street to purchase materials with which to fashion their several war paints and decorations.

This drug-store building was one of the first two-story structures in San Antonio and served in part as the doctor's home.

The pioneer doctor rendered willing, unselfish service to the comparatively poor, but hap-



OX CARTS ON NAVARRO STREET

py citizenship of the old town and his enterprise notably contributed to its civic growth.

On West Commerce Street not far from the drug store, was located San Antonio's first lumber yard. It was conducted by James, Montel and Company who also operated the first saw mill in the vicinity of the town. This mill was built at Bandera, Texas, about fifty miles north of San Antonio, in 1852. It was run by horse power and produced cypress lumber, shingles and lath, which were hauled to San Antonio, in the usual way, by ox teams.

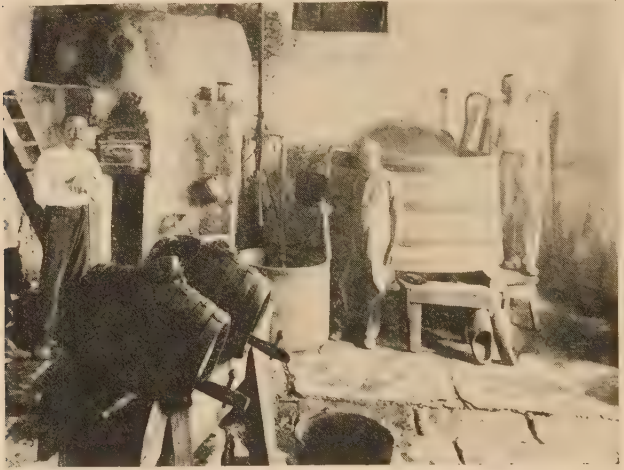
SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST MANUFACTURING
ENTERPRISE AND THE MAN WHO
MADE IT FAMOUS

The first article to be manufactured in San Antonio was beer, and Mr. Wm. A. Menger, Sr., the founder of the Menger Hotel, was the proprietor of the first brewery.

Mr. Menger built his plant adjoining Alamo Plaza in 1855 and employed Mr. Charles Degen as brewmaster. The product soon became widely known as "Menger Beer." It had no competitor in San Antonio and the surrounding country until the entry of the railroad.

The hops and malt were brought from New York by boat to Indianola and thence were transported to San Antonio by wagon. Returning, the wagons carried the finished product to the towns along the route to the coast. Other freighters returning from San Antonio carried beer to the mountain settlements west and north of the town, where it awoke the songs of the Fatherland.

New Braunfels, that picturesque, quaint, little German village, became a sort of annex



THE DEGEN BREWERY

to San Antonio on the road to the capital, Austin, whose inhabitants also consumed a quantity of Menger beer.

Continued demand kept the noted old brewer, Charlie Degen, busy supplying his sparkling beverage to thirsty Texans in those struggling days of West Texas civilization.

The original Menger brewery was finally supplanted by the Menger Hotel, the brewing equipment being moved a short distance away, where it continued to be operated by Mr. Degen, in a primitive way, for many years.



THE CASINO

The manufacture of beer gave rise to the development of social organizations. As early as 1845 the Casino Association was formed for the entertainment of its members and the community generally. In 1858 this association erected San Antonio's first club and opera house building on Market Street.

It was difficult to induce theatrical companies to travel to San Antonio by stage-coach or horseback, and it was a great undertaking on the part of the people to provide a sufficient fund to make up the necessary guarantees.

Joseph Jefferson declined an engagement because there were no railroads, but others came despite all inconveniences.

The stage coach service, however, had improved considerably by that time. A line owned and operated by G. H. Giddings and R. E. Doyle, established in 1857, advertised exceptional passenger service from San Antonio to San Diego and all intermediate points. This service included new coaches, drawn by six mules, over the entire length of the line (excepting one hundred miles of Colorado desert that had to be crossed on mule back) and an armed escort through the Indian country.

The coaches left San Antonio semi-monthly for California and daily for Indianola, Texas. From the latter point travelers made connection by water with all sections of the United States, east of and tributary to the Mississippi.

In later years many of the country's foremost entertainers appeared at the Casino. Barrett and Booth, of undying theatrical fame, played there, as did Fay Templeton, Tiffany Fraine and other noted actors and actresses. Wm. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) also made an appearance in his characteristic western way.

THE OLD MARKET

The old municipal market house, built on Market Street in 1858, was another evidence of civic progressiveness.



MARKET STREET (1858)

It was the center of the town life. Housewives of the community would gather there

in the early mornings to do their shopping and gossiping, and the interesting news of a fortnight was received along with the vegetables, meats and wild game.

Stylishly dressed ladies visited the market in coach-and-four, or in queer little beetle-shaped cabs. Naturally they attracted particular attention and demanded special service.

Wild turkeys were so plentiful they became a drug on the market even at fifteen and twenty cents a turkey. Dried buffalo meat, direct from the plains, was announced on San Antonio's bill of fare. There was real buffalo also; upon one occasion a young buffalo was pursued through Commerce Street by a cowboy.

Most of the vendors in the market were of Mexican type and their big mantillas and high crowned, wide-brimmed hats produced a picturesque effect. Then, too, the market had a famous lunch room with negro cooks who broiled the finest steaks in the South and made coffee with which even the fragrant liquid of the campfire could not compare.

Cowboys frequented the market-house lunch counter for a cup of this coffee and lent local color to the surroundings with their long "six-

shooters" dangling carelessly but significantly from hob-nailed, cowhide belts.

These cowboys were indeed "boys" and, boy-like, indulged in stunts. Mounted on ponies, they would toss coins to the ground and ride away a little distance to gain momentum on their return. Then, yelling like Indians, the riders would swoop down on the coins and pick them up while hanging by one leg to the saddle. They were so expert that they seldom failed to accomplish the trick.

They drove their herds of cattle through the streets and the old "longhorns" occasionally stampeded at the sight of "civilized" objects, causing consternation and ruin along the path.

Upon one occasion an excited steer entered the front door of a clothing store and was followed by the remainder of the herd sweeping through the building in cyclonic fashion.

In addition to the amusements furnished by the cowboys a number of Indian youths entertained the American boys daily on Main Plaza by shooting at targets with bows and arrows. The young Americans would place coins on the ends of sticks and the Indians would shoot them off from a distance of thirty or forty feet.

THE ALAMO CITY



MAIN PLAZA (1860)

These little eagle-eyed Indian lads were good marksmen and made the sport equally, if not more, interesting to the school boys than the cock fights.

CLOUDS OF WAR

In February, 1860, the immortal Confederate General Robert E. Lee, then a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army, arrived in San Antonio to take charge of the Department of Texas during the absence of Gen. Twiggs.

The period of his command was brief as General Twiggs assumed command again just



FREIGHT WAGONS ON COMMERCE STREET

when the clouds of civil war began to gather over the American Union.

Political differences arose, controversies became general, discontent spread throughout the nation and civil war became inevitable.

When this conflict threatened the nation, San Antonio was a prosperous town of eight or nine thousand inhabitants. It enjoyed a large Mexican trade and its merchants controlled the commerce of the surrounding region, from the Colorado River on the north to the Rio Grande on the west and almost to

the Gulf on the south. It was then the supply point for the United States Army stationed on the frontier. Large mercantile houses transacted a profitable business and money was plentiful. But, insofar as immigration was concerned, the country practically was at a stand-still. Although the community was prosperous, some developments of its prosperity were ephemeral — it was affected by unusual rather than natural conditions and actual resources. Large herds of cattle grazed over the surrounding prairies, but there was no market for them. The sheep industry was then in its infancy and the output of agricultural products generally proved inadequate to home demand. In fact, with the one exception of beef, the town was obliged to buy everything it consumed from abroad.

A majority of the citizens was opposed to secession and, when the measure was submitted to them, voted against it. Nevertheless, the town soon became a hotbed of Confederate military operations and it was worth as much as a man's life to espouse the cause of the Union. The most important event of the war, insofar as Texas soil was affected, was the



NORTH ALAMO STREET (1860)

voluntary surrender of United States troops by their commander, General Twiggs. This act put the Alamo, then occupied by Union forces, and more than two hundred thousand dollars worth of U. S. Government property in possession of the Confederate forces.

On the evening of February 16, 1861, the United States troops vacated their quarters and marched out of San Antonio accompanied by a large concourse of citizens. There was a profound sensation among the people. Strong-hearted men wept as the grand old flag disappeared from view and the national airs that were played by the departing military bands died away in the distance.

The removal of the United States Army from the frontier, together with the depression that succeeded the beginning of hostilities, seriously affected business in San Antonio for a while. As the war progressed, however, the strategic location of the place, with respect to commerce as well as war, caused it to become the entrepot for all the cotton trade that found an outlet through Mexico, and the city soon became a busy mart once more. Its merchants passed thousands of Mexican dollars over their counters and into flour barrels as fortune after fortune was made.

But the scenes of this interesting stage of Old San Antonio's life were to be changed for others in succeeding situations of peace and progress.

THE MARCH OF PROGRESS

CHAPTER II

1865-1926

PEACE AND PROGRESS

AS the war drew to a close San Antonio again became the central headquarters for the United States military occupation and the city flourished, notwithstanding the business paralysis that obtained throughout the greater portion of the South until 1872. The Vance building on Houston Street, later distinguished as the Mahncke Hotel, long familiar to the townspeople and traveling public of early days, was leased by the government and used as a subsistence commissariat until a new Quartermaster Depot was built at Fort Sam Houston in 1878.

The town made some forward strides. In 1866 artificial gas was introduced for lighting purposes and a factory was established for the manufacture of ice. Prior to that time this commodity was a precious luxury and the little that was to be had in San Antonio came



VANCE BUILDING

from Boston or New York in small sail boats that made a specialty of transporting ice. These boats brought their cargo to Indianola and it was hauled by ox carts or muledrawn prairie schooners to San Antonio.

Some progressive citizens reorganized San Antonio's volunteer fire department in 1866. A company had been in existence for several years before the Civil War but it was discontinued during the conflict. The equipment consisted of two hand-drawn and operated pumps that required fifteen or more men, each, to handle. In 1867 a hook and ladder was added and a company organized to man it. Mr. G. A. Duerler, one of the first manufac-



FRENCH BUILDING

turers of San Antonio, was the captain of this company and served in the town's fire department for fifteen years.

The volunteer fire company consisted of thirty-two of the best citizens of the town, who willingly gave their services for the good of their community. Some of them are still living and continuing to contribute to the welfare of the city they love.

SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST NATIONAL BANK

The San Antonio National Bank, the first national bank established in San Antonio, was organized by George W. Brackenridge in 1866. Earlier that year national banks had been

established in Houston and Galveston, Texas. The pioneer national bank of San Antonio began its career in the old French Building on Main Plaza, built in 1856, which was the most up-to-date office building of its day and remains as one of the few landmarks of old San Antonio. This massive stone structure had also housed one of San Antonio's first private banks, that of French and Florian, in the early fifties.

A SECOND VISITATION OF CHOLERA

In the fall of 1866 San Antonio was visited again by cholera and the authorities ordered all public and private schools to be closed indefinitely. The epidemic, like that of 1849, was malignant and claimed many victims daily. It lasted six weeks, after which time the schools were reopened and business was resumed; but the depressing effect of the scourge greatly retarded the progress of San Antonio until 1870.

ESTABLISHMENT OF FORT SAM HOUSTON

Forty acres of land were donated by the town to the United States Government in 1870

for the establishment of a permanent military post, which became known as Fort Sam Houston in honor of General Houston.

By order of W. W. Belknap, Secretary of War, construction of the Quartermaster's department and other buildings began in 1875. The Post, however, was not ready for occupancy until 1879.

SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST SCHOOL FOR COLORED CHILDREN

During the period of Reconstruction, while Texas was under military rule, a school for colored children was built by the United States Freedman's Bureau, an organization formed after the Civil War to promote education of the negro. This school was taken over by the town in 1871. Mrs. Sarah Newcomb Merrick, a sister of the late Professor Simon Newcomb, the astronomer of Washington, D. C., was one of its first teachers. Later, when colored teachers became available, the white teachers were transferred to other schools. Mrs. Merrick, who died in Boston a few years ago, served as a principal and taught in the public schools of San Antonio for many years.



OLD SOUTH FLORES STREET SCHOOL

Though the town maintained public schools from the year 1850, they were not adequately fostered or developed until 1871. In addition to taking over the colored school, in that year, the town built a four-room, two-story stone school-house on South Flores Street. This was in reality San Antonio's first public school building and was a nucleus for the present splendid public school system.

THE NEW OPERA HOUSE

In 1872 the San Antonio Turn-Verein Association, which had been organized in 1866, built a club house adjoining the Menger Hotel on Alamo Plaza. This clubhouse was re-

ferred to as the "New Opera House" in a dodger that was circulated to announce the production of "The Cross of Gold, or The Maidens Vow," a grand testimonial to Edm'd D. Langley, in which Mr. Langley and Oliver Wren played the important roles. Seven years later, the Turners erected a new clubhouse and theater at the corner of East Houston and St. Mary's Streets, where John T. Raymond, Sol Smith Russell, Frederick Warde, Roland Reed, Minnie Maddern, Ada Grey and the Emma Abbott Opera Company appeared successively to the great delight of all who attended the performances.

SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST TELEGRAPH

The first telegraph line to enter the town was constructed by the United States Government, in 1876, to connect the San Antonio department with other military centers.

THE RAILROAD ERA

The community came to realize that railroad facilities should be provided to insure a trade control of more than a very limited territory, and, acting on this conviction offered liberal inducements to any railway that would

reach San Antonio within a given time. In consequence of this enterprising movement, the Southern Pacific entered February 15, 1877. This was the most important event in the local history of transportation and the momentous occasion, was celebrated with a torch light procession, eight thousand strong.

This achievement assured the permanence of U. S. military headquarters, a most significant factor in the town's growth and welfare. With the advent of the Southern Pacific population increased, new buildings appeared and trade began to expand. Unlike that of antebellum times, the commerce and prosperity of San Antonio were organized in dependence upon actual resources. Both stock-raising and agriculture prospered and, with the coming of new people and capital, the town and the surrounding country increased in well-being substantially, day by day.

An enterprising daily newspaper kept San Antonio in touch with the happenings of the world and the railroads continuously brought in new people seeking homes.

Interest in San Antonio's story and its historical buildings grew with the coming of the

railroad. Hundreds of travelers, many from distant places, came.

At that time the Alamo was used as a wholesale grocery store and warehouse. One of the visitors, a gentleman who as a child had played about David Crockett's knee, asked to be shown the spot where the hero died. To his surprise and disappointment no one could point out where the immortal Crockett made his last valiant stand.

So little was the neighborhood cared for that, after every rain, pools of water stood in front of the Alamo and the Plaza was a mere bog, a convention place for frogs.

But San Antonio was not without champions of civic pride. The editor of a weekly sheet made the following exhortation:

"Let the square before the Alamo be improved and ornamented; let it bear the stamp of civilization; let a suitable monument be erected, a monument that will express our gratitude to the fame of the men who died to give America liberty and American institutions birth on Texas soil."

As a result of the influx of people subsequent to the building of the railroad and the period



MENGGER HOTEL (1877)

of prosperity that followed, the noted old Menger Hotel saw its golden days. It received its quota of guests, many of them historic figures, to delight in the service of the pioneer hostelry. In that era it sheltered and entertained some of the nation's most distinguished men; among them General W. T. Sherman, Secretary of War Belknap (under whose supervision Fort Sam Houston was established as a permanent military center), and Hon. Edmond J. Davis, who served as Texas' chief executive during a most exciting and critical

time. These and many other eminent people were "wined and dined" in the building that lent an air of civic advancement to Alamo Plaza.

At the time the Southern Pacific entered San Antonio Colonel Thomas W. Pierce was its president and he took a keen interest in the town's future.

He was a big-hearted, broad-minded, enterprising New Englander, but not completely given over to "modernism." In answer to a query as to how San Antonio should progress and at the same time conserve its individual assets, he replied that it would be an advantage if the old quarter of San Antonio could be left undisturbed with all its ancient quaintness.

There were other far-sighted pioneers who, like Colonel Pierce, foresaw the importance of preserving Old San Antonio's landmarks and institutions, and one of her city builders, some years later, made these remarks with reference to their perpetuation.

"I have ever since been impressed by the shrewd railroad magnate's remarks. Our old town has been rapidly growing into a modern city. The flat roofed Moorish stone buildings

with thick walls, projecting stone water spouts, wide arched entrances, iron grated windows, and dirt floors have nearly all disappeared or suffered the repairs of modern house builders.

"We even witness the work of widening and straightening some of the old narrow crooked streets. Why? Because some wide, pretentious avenue with modern structures had bulged itself upon the old contracted highway, like an intrusion of a flashily dressed, vulgar stranger upon the society of a genteel, old fashioned citizen.

"When our city becomes a competitor of other cities in the struggle for modern improvements we will find that the new town where the paint smells fresh; where the buildings stack up into stories; where the uniformity of business architecture marks as monotonous and commonplace the so-called genuine business city, San Antonio may have a hard time keeping in the race: but with some of our old-time charming customs preserved, some of our old buildings standing, some of our old streets left, and with our climate incomparable, San Antonio always will be a Mecca to travelers and the metropolis of the Lone Star State."

SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST STREET RAILWAY

In June, 1872, coincident with the building of the railroad, San Antonio's first street railway was formally put into operation and the first street car, a little Mexican mule drawn affair, made its maiden trip from San Pedro



ALAMO PLAZA (1878)

Springs to the terminus of the line on Alamo Plaza. This was a radical step in the direction of modernism; for, like the railroad, it opened up new territory for commerce. The car line traversed a portion of Houston Street. This thoroughfare then took on the character of a commercial highway. Substantial buildings and business houses sprang up along its course.

SAN ANTONIO'S FIRST WATER WORKS

The necessity for discontinuing the use of surface wells and ditches for the domestic water supply had long been realized by the people and the second visitation of cholera in 1866 had impressed them with the imperative



EAST HOUSTON STREET (1878)

need of a sanitary system of water works; hence in 1878 the first pumping-plant was built and distribution pipes were laid to safeguard the health and at the same time to meet the growing needs of the community. This plant has been extended year after year until the system now is one of the finest and its water considered the best in the United States.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The year 1879 marked the advent of an era of higher development in the progress of San Antonio's public schools. Until then the schools had struggled for existence, largely because of a then prevalent prejudice against education at public expense as well as by reason of the number of private establishments that ministered to the educational needs of the community. There were but five school buildings, four for white and one for colored children. The total enrollment was seven hundred and the number of teachers thirty-three. The new era in local educational history was marked by the opening of the first public high school in 1879, under the superintendency of Professor W. C. Rote.

From the year 1880 San Antonio entered into a new era of prosperity. It became evident that the Old Town was developing into a real city. Confidence in future possibilities encouraged capital and stimulated building activities. Progressiveness and civic pride took a firm hold upon the citizenship of the community and the railroad encouraged farming, stock-raising and other industries.

THE CHILI STANDS

The march of progress, however, had not obliterated all the distinctive customs and institutions of Old San Antonio that were worth perpetuating. The most interesting of these were the chili stands that "came out" in



CHILI STANDS (1880)

the evenings, with the stars, and fringed the plazas. Many a distinguished traveler wended his way to San Antonio or detoured from his intended itinerary to visit the chili stands that were presided over by typical young Mexican women, appropriately referred to as "Chili Queens." These queens of the star-lit plazas were a source of unfailing interest.



MILITARY PLAZA (1880)

The way of the old chili vendor was to squat on the ground beside an earthen vessel and dish out its steaming contents to the customer.

But later these chili vendors served their customers at crude tables in the open air. The tables were covered with oil cloth and large

lamps of a peculiar homemade pattern furnished illumination.

All this paraphernalia was carted to the plaza at nightfall and removed before the vegetable and forage vendors occupied the same ground in the morning; for the plazas served as common market places.

When the chili stands were "in full swing" the scene was quaint indeed. Blazing fires, the flickering lamps, the merry laughter, the badinage, the peppery viands all combined to make the chili stand the most charming feature of night life in San Antonio. It was no cause for wonder that the stranger came to enjoy the novelty of a Mexican supper on the Plaza and carried away with him a highly colored picture of his experience.

Besides the chili stands, which were the main attraction, the faker also was present in all his glory: the man with the electric battery, the astronomer with his telescope, the Diamond King doctor who pulled teeth so expertly and swiftly that a little thing like getting hold of the wrong tooth "cut no ice" with the skillful performer arrayed in glistening gems.

The plazas presented a scene comparable to the midway of a fair every night of the year.

In telling of the interesting institutions of the old town the story would be incomplete if no mention were made of Old San Antonio's "Gay White Way," where thrills "a-plenty" could be found. Gambling houses, saloons and vaudeville theatres were numerous, and they were frequented by the underworld characters of San Antonio and "gentlemen gunmen" of the olden days.

These features were interesting to the eastern stranger, and the tenderfoot often turned pale and wished himself back home as he witnessed a sudden shooting affray — an occurrence not at all infrequent.

Perhaps the most noted of San Antonio's old resorts was the saloon, gambling house and variety theatre of Jack Harris. This building stood at the corner of Main Plaza and Soledad Street and a portion of it was occupied by, and well advertised as, Sim Hart's Cigar Store. It was here that the notorious killing of Ben Thompson and his companion, King Fisher, occurred after Jack Harris, the proprietor, had met a violent death in the same place at the

hands of Ben Thompson. The site was appropriately called "The Fatal Corner."

This was the period of San Antonio's life that the immortal Sidney Porter, "O'Henry," knew and loved. Here he made his studies of human nature, gained inspiration and developed the literary ability that caused him to be



THE FATAL CORNER

proclaimed later as America's greatest short story writer. O'Henry's favorite haunts were the Mexican quarter, the cock pits, the gambling resorts, variety theatres, the beer gardens and the old plazas. His stories, "The Call of the Tame," "The Higher Abdication" and "A Fog in San Antonio" reflect an era of high romance in the history of the Alamo City.

The old Bella Union Theater at the corner of South Laredo and Dolorosa Streets, the Washington Theater at West Commerce and Laredo, the Gray Mule Theater just across the street from the Washington: these, indeed, formed an interesting aggregation. In each of them the lower floor was devoted to a bar, a gambling room and cock pit. On the second floors variety shows were staged that entertained their guests until midnight, after which the participants and spectators danced and drank together until the small hours of the morning. The writer looking for local color; the artist, for atmosphere, the sociologist, food for thought, all found it here.

"The Gray Mule," one of the most notorious resorts of its day, furnished the inspiration for O'Henry's "Call of the Tame;" while the Bella Union supplied the principal setting for "A Fog in San Antonio," the preliminary scene of which was laid in the famous Scholz's Palm Garden in another quarter of the town.

This popular beer garden was one of the show places of San Antonio. In the front portion facing Alamo Street, was a well conducted bar while the rear end, opening on to old



SCHOLZ'S PALM GARDEN

Losoya Street, was built into a spacious garden, with a sort of double-decked mezzanine floor, all of which was decorated with palms, bananas, ferns and other ornamental plants. A glass skylight over the center afforded an abundance of light and contributed to the attractiveness of the garden, which was frequented by the townspeople, their children, and most of San Antonio's visitors. Here the patrons of that pleasant old garden could sit and drink the freshly tapped beer and relish a delicious free lunch, "all for a nickel," or enjoy an evening listening to the strains of Carl Beck's fine old German band.



WEST COMMERCE STREET (1880)

Nor should one, perhaps, forget to tell of the quiet and orderly saloon on Commerce Street, kept by the old hunter, Capt. Ernest Dosch. He loved the woods and hills, and the call of the wild was ever a welcome one. His place was famous for its collection of buck horns, largely the spoils of his own rifle—in reality, a hunter's club-house.

He was a man of strong personality, his features distinctive, his eyes keen and hospitable. He was an interesting talker and enjoyed the company of old friends. For more than



COL. BRACKENRIDGE

a quarter of a century Captain Dosch and George W. Brackenridge, the banker, were neighbors and close personal friends.

Colonel Brackenridge was one of San Antonio's most progressive and philanthropic citizens. His influence in the community, his development of San Antonio's water supply, his donations of land and money to promote education and advance the public good constitute a monument that will endure.

THE TELEPHONE

In line with the progressive activities of the time, San Antonio's first telephone exchange was installed in 1881.

THE FIRST HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING

San Antonio's first High School building, a three-story stone structure, was erected in 1882, facing a muddy street then known as



OLD MAIN AVENUE HIGH SCHOOL

Acequia (Ditch) Street. This site became the Main Avenue High School of Modern San Antonio.

The fine edifice, with a stately cupola surmounting it was surrounded by a high picket fence. If, at recess, Johnny wanted to squander a nickel on doughnuts or fresh made candy, he had to get permission of the teacher in charge of the gate.

The school yard was so crowded with "fourth-graders" playing marbles and spinning tops that the seniors chose to remain indoors during recreation periods to study or make preparations for chemistry experiments.

Professor Edward Knox, the present Assistant Superintendent of the public schools, was graduated from the old High School in 1885. He still recalls an experience that he and Seymour Thomas, an artist in Paris who spent his boyhood in San Antonio, had during one of these recess intervals. As was their custom, they turned to the back of the chemistry book for suggestions for experiments and found a formula for gunpowder. When the product was completed they tapped the little ball, first gently, then with force. The resulting explosion brought Professor Halbedl, the principal, and Mrs. Noyes-Evans, the only high school teacher, to the scene. The surprised boys gave the teachers the vague information that something had exploded.

Mrs. Noyes-Evans now recalls how the teachers brought kindling from home to start the school fires and how the stove wood was carried in armfuls to the second and third floors of the school building.

Tin water buckets and tin cups served as drinking fountains at which the entire attendance quenched its thirst, with flagrant indifference to the theory or presence of germs.

Such inconveniences, as we would judge them now, were not so regarded in the days of the early eighties.

THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE

Further civic progress was evidenced in 1886 by the erection of the Grand Opera House on Alamo Plaza.

Mr. Ernest Rische was its first manager and induced many superior "shows" to come to San Antonio in the days of melodrama, such as "Jim, the Penman," "Lena, the Madcap," "Wages of Sin," and "The Hidden Hand."

There are many San Antonians who still have a vivid recollection of Hanlan's "Fantasma," and of Rice's "Evangeline," played at the Grand.

CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS

In order to meet the growing needs of the city's governmental affairs the City Fathers decided in 1888 to settle in a permanent home on Military Plaza and subsequently, in 1889, an imposing municipal building was erected in the center of the historic old square. It was built during the administration of Mayor Bryan Callaghan II, who served the



THE CITY HALL

town and city as its chief executive, with the exception of short intervals, from 1885 to 1912, and who was by far the most outstanding figure in the civic and political history of San Antonio.

THE ELECTRIC STREET CAR

The first electric street railway was put into operation in 1890 and the old mule-car system was gradually abandoned. In that year San Antonio had a population of almost thirty-eight thousand, a sufficient number to



BRYAN CALLAGHAN

maintain its rating as the most populous city in Texas. It boasted of three railroad lines, a complete system of water works, paved streets and plazas, the best opera house in the South, good hotels, efficient schools, three daily newspapers, and the most important military post in the United States.

THE BATTLE OF FLOWERS

At this station along the march of progress the people of San Antonio paused to pay a special tribute to the Texans' sacrifice at the Alamo and their victory at San Jacinto.

In keeping with this purpose an annual celebration, known as The Battle of Flowers, was inaugurated, in 1891.

It has become an established custom, and its observance in San Antonio on the anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto, April twenty-first, each year attracts nation wide interest. Symbolizing the burial of all animosities be-



FLOWER BATTLE IN FRONT OF ALAMO

tween Texas and Mexico, it is a fitting way in which to show appreciation of the beneficent results of never-to-be-forgotten heroes and their high achievements.

At the time of the first Battle of Flowers, Benjamin Harrison, then President, was making a trip through the South. He was scheduled to arrive in San Antonio on April twenty-first, the day set for the pageant, and it was anticipated that the celebration would contrib-

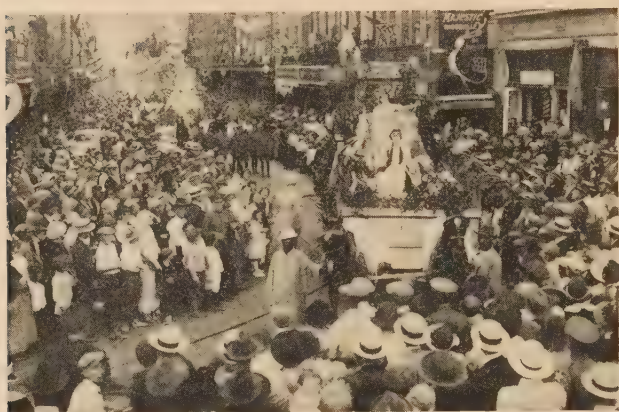
ute to the entertainment of that distinguished and most welcome guest.

President Harrison arrived in the midst of a drenching rain that prevented the program of the festival from being carried out on that day. Despite the downpour, he delivered an address from a platform on Alamo Plaza. While speaking the chief executive must have presented an amusing picture, with his trousers turned up "high and dry" and umbrellas held over him.

When the skies cleared the first festival program was carried out.

Several anniversaries were celebrated and they proved so impressive that the fame of the Flower Fete was heralded abroad. The celebration of 1896 aroused especial interest. Its brilliant pageant, its array of fair women, flower-decked vehicles drawn by graceful teams, cyclists, gallant cavalcades and merry battle of flowers, in which thousands of roses were thrown, made it impressive indeed.

Immediately succeeding this battle a convention of Knights Templar was held, followed by a meeting of the State Saenger Fest, which completed an eventful month for San Antonio.



FLOWER BATTLE PARADE

A prize band contest was arranged for the 1897 festival, and bands from all parts of the State were invited to participate. On the afternoon of the twenty-first, these bands assembled on Alamo Plaza, and took turns at playing airs of their own selection until the hour of the battle; then they joined the parade. After the battle, the bands assembled again on the plaza and united in playing "America" and the popular airs of the day.

The next flower battle (that of April 21st, 1898) will be long remembered by all who witnessed it. On that day the United States declared war against Spain. The military of

Fort Sam Houston had always been an interesting feature of the flower parade, but on this occasion with public feeling aroused, Uncle Sam's soldiers proved the center of attraction, and cheer after cheer greeted them from the pavements, from the house tops, from every point as they marched through the crowded streets. It was a thrice memorable day. The bands played patriotic music and many a Texas boy was inspired to offer his services and, if need be, his life to his country.

PASSING OF THE OLD FESTIVAL

Year after year new features were added to make the new surpass the old festivals. The original custom of a one day festival to which San Antonio's neighbors came for the day and returned to their homes with a pleasant impression of a gala time, was transformed, 1900, into a week's spring carnival, a revel of mirth and gaiety, with spectacular parades and carnival shows.

These annual events do more than furnish entertainment, for, each recurring year they animate the people of this locality with a quickened appreciation of the far-flung meaning of San Jacinto and the Alamo.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By the year 1900 the population of San Antonio had increased to more than fifty-three thousand, exclusive of the suburbs and the United States military establishments.



MAIN PLAZA (1900)

The city was in a more prosperous condition than ever before and efficiency was at a high mark in all civic functioning.

San Antonio then became the cleanest, best paved, largest and most advanced city in Texas. Nearly all the old landmarks had been razed, resorts and variety theaters closed; most of the old customs had been lost sight of, and traditions forgotten. The manifest in-

difference of this period to vanishing glories and older days was necessarily attendant upon the preoccupation and effort of the community in its giant strides upon the way of progress. Happily, however, the old ideals and some of the people to whose genius they owe their birth, remain to add their influence in the shaping of San Antonio's destiny.

LANDMARKS THAT HAVE DISAPPEARED

With but few exceptions, the monuments of an older time, landmarks that lent to San Antonio an old-world atmosphere and individuality have given way to modern institutions more "in keeping" with the times. One by one its ancient structures have been replaced by modern buildings, until the San Antonio of yesterday has been transformed for the most part into the modern city of "to-day," a twentieth century metropolis.

The Veramendi House, formerly the home of Governor Veramendi, in which the wedding of the brave Bowie to the Governor's daughter was celebrated after the marriage ceremony in the old San Fernando church, stood intact in the heart of San Antonio's business quarter until recent years. Finally, even it was effaced.



THE VERAMENDI HOUSE

They who remember picture its shaded court, the spacious rooms, and the wide doorway in which hung massive cedar portals punctured with bullet holes—mementos of that glorious battle, “The Storming of San Antonio de Bexar” (1835), in which Ben Milam died.

The home of the Garza family on Veramendi Street, typical of those substantial houses built by the Canary Island settlers, has been replaced by an up-to-date department store building.

A splendid hostelry now occupies the site of the Mahncke Hotel, of which Old San Antonio was justly proud, and the old post office building near Main Plaza has been demolished.



THE GARZA HOMESTEAD

The Casino on Market Street held its social prestige as a club and opera house through a period of sixty-five years, but it too has fallen a victim to commercialism.

The old market house, which artists pronounced a perfect specimen of Grecian architecture, stood, until recently, on Market Street, but its doors were closed, its iron gates locked, and its windows barred. For many years it was used only as a storehouse for hardware and implements while awaiting silently the fast approaching hour when com-



THE OLD MARKET HOUSE

mercial progress would decree that its Doric pillars and massive walls of hand-hewn stone give way to the widening of the old narrow Market Street. This landmark was demolished in 1925. Too, the old hunter's retreat, the Dosch Saloon on Commerce Street, has been cleared away to make room for a modern banking institution.

With the passing of San Antonio's saloons the old west side variety theaters, gambling houses and resorts, which were the favorite haunts of O'Henry, have disappeared.

LA VILLITA

"La Villita," the little village or residence section established in the mission-building period, on the south bank of the river, still retains some of its quaint semi-ancient buildings. Among them is the old adobe house on Villita Street in which General Cos, the Mexican commander, had his headquarters and at which he surrendered to Colonel Frank W. Johnston after Ben Milam had fallen during the "Storming of San Antonio de Bexar."

THE PLAZAS

A view of the plazas of San Antonio reveals that the settings about them have changed considerably since the days of Spanish rule.

Time has wrought a transformation in Alamo Plaza, for the view of this pretty square, surrounded as it is by modern buildings, does not measurably resemble the plaza of olden days. Only the chapel and sacred ground of the Alamo have escaped the hand of modern progress and remain to bear witness to the transformation. Even the pleasant old Menger Hotel, although retaining its delightful Spanish patio and distinctiveness, has been modernized.



ALAMO PLAZA (1926)

Nearly all of the low stone buildings that encircled Military Plaza and comprised the Presidio de Bejar have disappeared. In fact only the headquarters of the Spanish Military Governor, usually referred to as the Governor's Palace, has survived. A carved keystone over



THE HAPSBURG COAT OF ARMS

the doorway of this ancient building bears the double eagle of the Hapsburgs, the escutcheon of Spain during her alliance with Austria, and beneath it the date 1749. Even an iron ring, to which the Governor tied his charger, may be seen in the wall today. This is the last remaining relic of Royal Spanish occupation in San Antonio and the only evidence of Hapsburg rule in the United States. This unique symbol is in the path of civic improvement and likely to be destroyed.



BEXAR COUNTY COURT HOUSE



BANK OF COMMERCE

All of the original buildings on Main Plaza, formerly known as the Plaza de las Yslas, have vanished.

Bexar county's massive brown stone Court House building is at the south end of the old square and the National Bank of Commerce now stands on the "Fatal Corner" of the plaza and Soledad

Street. Another modern bank and office building, one of the tallest in San Antonio, has been erected on the west side of the Plaza. This building occupies a site that was formerly enclosed by the high stone wall of an arsenal in the days of the Presidio de Bejar. Later this property was deeded by the Spanish King to the Trevinio family, who built their home and lived there. Historic little Trevinio Street, so named for the Spanish family, separates the new skyscraper from the remodeled semi-modern San Fernando Cathedral.



MAIN PLAZA (1926)

The architecture of the new bank building, typifying the twentieth century, stands out in striking contrast to that of the old Parish Church that was the pride of San Fernando de Austria (San Antonio).

The San Fernando Cathedral, (formerly the Parish Church of San Fernando de Austria), as it is today, is a product of three periods.

In 1868 remodeling was begun on the original church, built in 1738. The newer structure was built around and over the front portion of the old, which was gradually removed to afford more room for the congregation. The remaining portion of the old structure was converted into a spacious sanctuary for the remodeled church. The altar is directly under the ancient dome and the sacristy just behind the altar. Recently a new addition was added to the rear of the church, which completely surrounds and so conceals the remaining portion of the old edifice that only a small part of its dome is visible.

This new addition serves as an office for the pastor, an assembly hall, a reception-room and a museum. Over these are living quarters for the resident priests.

LAST OF THE ISLANDERS

Along with the landmarks the old Spanish settlers have passed. Only a few of the descendants of the original settlers from the Canary Islands survive, but many of San Antonio's streets have appropriately been named for those Castilian pioneers.

The day of the Mexican ox-cart has gone, and even burro-drawn vehicles are seldom, if ever, seen. San Antonio, however, has a large population of Spanish and Mexican descent.

Old San Antonio has changed to the New. The hovering airship has become familiar and the automobile, which marked the passing of Old Dobbin, entered San Antonio's field of transportation years ago.

The skyscraper looms where ancient low buildings stood and the hum and commotion of modern industry announce to the World that San Antonio, the City, has come into her own.

MODERN SAN ANTONIO

CHAPTER III

1926

THE MISSIONS

MANY American towns, particularly those that have followed in this wake of the westward March of Empire, are much alike; but San Antonio is an exception; for, notwithstanding that most of her landmarks have vanished, the evolution of modern business has not yet effaced all evidences of the past. The ruins of the Texas Franciscan Missions and a few buildings remain as mementos of Spanish occupation.

In the midst of San Antonio's business district are nestled the ruins of the Mission San Antonio de Valero (better known as the Alamo). On either side of the vine covered walls that surround its ancient courtyard, modern structures stand.

Aside from its historical significance as one of the Texas Franciscan Missions and the part it played in the founding of San Fernando



COURTYARD OF THE ALAMO



MISSION SAN ANTONIO DE VALERO (The Alamo)

(San Antonio), the Alamo is of enduring interest to liberty-loving Americans, for it served as a fortress in which freemen died defending their rights. From the time of the memorable siege and fall, when its walls were stained with the blood of Travis and his brave comrades, it has been revered as a shrine of liberty.

Mission La Purísima Concepción de Acuña, generally referred to as Mission Concepcion, erected in 1731, is located in what is regarded as San Antonio's close-in residential section. Modern dwellings now surround Mission



MISSION CONCEPCION

Concepción and occupy the land once tilled by the converted Indians.

Mission San José de Aguayo (built in 1720), the most elaborately ornamented mission of the San Antonio group, stands in the valley of the San Antonio River two miles below Mission Concepcion and about five miles south of the San Fernando church, the geographical center of the city.

At the time of its building Mission San José was in the wilderness but now a residential part of San Antonio extends to within a short distance of its imposing ruins.

The building of missions San Juan Capistrano, known as San Juan, and San Francisco



MISSION SAN JOSE

de la Espada, called Espada for short, was coincident with that of Concepcion. These missions stand below Mission San José, about three miles apart.

One of the many beautiful paved drives leading out of San Antonio makes a southern loop and encircles the mission area. This glassy roadway, which sweeps close by the venerable old structures, assures a panoramic view of them to the modern motorist traveler.

(The ruins of the Alamo, which are in custody of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, belong to the State, but those of other missions of the San Antonio group are owned



MISSION ESPADA

by the Catholic Church of Texas. The acquisition by the State of the old convent portion of the Alamo was due principally to the efforts and financial assistance of Mrs. Clara Driscoll Sevier. In recognition of this signal service a portrait of Mrs. Sevier was placed in the State Capitol building at Austin.)

Other cities, in what was known as "Spanish America" before the American occupation, have their plazas, presidios and missions; but nowhere in the United States are there such memorials of a historic past as in San Antonio. Even the old buildings of Montreal and Quebec do not compare in point of historical importance, in simplicity, or in grandeur.



MODERN RESIDENCE (Spanish Type)

Nearly all of the narrow, crooked streets that distinguished San Antonio's business section and recalled like charms of old towns on this continent and in Europe have been straightened and made wider in order to accommodate the ever-increasing needs of traffic. These thoroughfares, which formerly were mere trails traversed by the ox-cart and the covered wagon, are now monopolized by the automobile and the electric street car.

The business section of San Antonio is not confined to the older portion. It has expanded, and the city's new growth is well laid out with wide streets. These are lined with modern

business structures, while in the residence parts are beautiful homes that justify community pride.

The Old World atmosphere is still in evidence and manifests itself majestically in the architectural scheme of the city's palatial homes, in that the fine artistic talent of Spain, Italy and England has entered into their planning and construction.

San Antonio's founders planned with due regard for the welfare and pleasure of its people. The public squares laid out by them have long served as community breathing spots and attest to the farsightedness of those settlement builders.

The older squares have been an inspiration for establishing an extensive system of parks. There are now forty-eight parks and plazas embracing more than six hundred acres of land and these afford San Antonians and their visitors ample ground for outdoor sports and recreation, almost the year round.

SAN PEDRO PARK

San Pedro Park is the oldest and most historic of San Antonio's playgrounds. It was



SWIMMING POOL IN SAN PEDRO PARK

here that the Mission San Antonio de Valero (The Alamo) was first established, after being removed from the banks of the Rio Grande. This park and Boston's Common have the distinction of being the oldest public playgrounds in the United States.

San Pedro Park, like other landmarks of San Antonio, has been modernized, but its crystal springs still yield the sparkling flow that proved a boon to the weary travelers of long ago and now supply the water for a favorite picnic ground and swimming pool.

TRAVIS PARK

This park, named for the immortal Travis, is another of San Antonio's breathing spots, but represents a later era. It has been but a few years since Travis Park was surrounded by fine residences. These, too, have gradually given way to business institutions until only



TRAVIS PARK

one or two remain. A splendid hotel building now occupies the site of a former spacious home of one of the pioneer families.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, built in 1875, is on the north side of the park and lends picturesqueness to the surroundings. The bell of this old church was cast in Troy, New York,

from a cannon used by the Texans in defending the Alamo.

THE MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM

To the north of Travis Park, the Municipal Auditorium rises majestically against a pleasing background formed by the river and residential section. Its location, therefore, is ideal.



THE MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM

This imposing edifice, with a seating capacity of six thousand and grounds that cover more than six acres, was completed in 1926 at an expenditure of more than a million dollars. Its doors were first opened for a coronation of the Queen of the Battle of Flowers.

BRACKENRIDGE PARK

The opening of Brackenridge Park, a magnificent tract near the head of the San Antonio River, a donation by the late Colonel Brackenridge, marked the beginning of a glorious era for lovers of the great outdoors.

Through years of private ownership, the natural beauty of Brackenridge Park has been protected. In its woodland the rabbit, squirrel, quail and native song birds made their homes unmolested.

The park was opened to the public in 1900 and the work of laying out its driveways and its garden spots was done under the direction of Alderman Ludwig Mahncke, the proprietor of the old Mahncke Hotel, who was the first Park Commissioner of San Antonio. He was instrumental in securing the donation of Brackenridge Park to the city and under his able supervision all the other parks and plazas of San Antonio were improved and beautified. As a fitting tribute to the efforts of Mr. Mahncke, a monument was erected in Brackenridge Park to his memory.

The work started so well by Commissioner Mahncke has been carried on by his successors



LUDWIG MAHNCKE

and particularly by the present popular Park Commissioner, Mr. Ray Lambert.

Brackenridge Park includes a deep tangled wild wood of natural forest growth, in and out of which wind pretty permanent roads and

through which the storied San Antonio River takes its graceful course. Spanish moss is plentiful and hangs in festoons from high branches of giant-trees, some of which bear marks that show them to be hundreds of years old. The park is surpassingly beautiful and can best be appreciated by those who travel along its winding drives.

You pass grand old trees, with their crowns high in the sunshine and their trunks in the shade. On every side there is a delightful surprise; now you are descending seemingly into a darker, more secluded portion of the forest, only to emerge again into an open spot. Hood's "Dream of the Woods" comes to your mind at every turn of the road.



A WINDING DRIVE IN BRACKENRIDGE PARK

Here and there through the park you find landscape gardening — lawns and flowering shrubs, banana and other ornamental plants. This scheme provides a pleasing contrast to the simple charming restfulness of the natural woods and undergrowth.

Many improvements have been made and additional pleasure features provided during the last few years. Tennis courts, a polo ground and golf course, a swimming pool, a zoo, and a Mexican village have been added and a delightful Alpine drive now follows the edge of some rugged hills that fringe the park and encircle a Japanese sunken garden.

SQUARES ON THE WEST SIDE

San Antonio has an interesting Mexican quarter where street scenes characteristic of towns of Old Mexico may be seen.

You might imagine yourself in Mexico as you cross to the west side of the San Pedro creek and proceed in the direction of the West Side Squares.

The municipal market occupies a greater portion of Paschal square. Here San Antonio's aristocracy mingles with the poorest class



MARKET HOUSE AND MILAM SQUARE

while doing the daily or weekly marketing. The main market building is equipped with all modern fixtures and devices for the handling of foodstuffs in a sanitary, attractive way and patrons are entertained by a four piece Mexican orchestra that plays dreamy Mexican airs — “La Paloma,” “La Golondrina,” and others, intermingled with popular American tunes. “Three O’Clock in the Morning” is a favorite with the very early morning patrons.

All sorts of Mexican vendors, men with candy, fruit, cookies and paper flowers of



MEXICAN VENDORS

varied hues, and women with freshly made tortillas, tamales, enchiladas or other Mexican food, gather outside of the main market to offer their wares as the shoppers come and go. The women with their mantillas drawn over their heads sit upon the pavement and puff leisurely at their corn shuck rolled cigarettes while waiting for prospective customers.

Hay Market Square adjoins the market on the west. This square has been paved, so that all available space may be utilized for market purposes. During the day it is crowded with vendors in wagons peddling wood, hay, melons, vegetables and fruits in season. In the evening these give way to the chili stands that



TYPICAL STORE—MEXICAN QUARTER

“come out” with the electric lights, as they did in the olden days with the stars; but the old kerosene lamps with their antique shades have disappeared.

Wholesale produce houses surround this square and Mexican beggars frequent them to pick up discarded fruit and vegetables. The Mexican quarter covers a large area south and west of the market. Washington Park is in the center of this district in which may be found stores that make a specialty of all sorts of herbs, condiments, pottery, drawn work,

hand made furniture, baskets and many other articles that are typical of Mexican craft but extremely odd to the eyes of the Anglo-American visitor.

On the north of the Market House is Milam Square, named for the brave Ben Milam whose remains rest there.

The park is well shaded by trees; in fact, to such an extent that very little grass grows under them. The place affords a rendezvous for members of San Antonio's unemployed Mexican population who monopolize the park benches and lounge in the shade.

A MILITARY CENTER

Because of the geographical and strategical location the city is a logical mobilization point and has become the largest military center in the United States.

Fort Sam Houston, Camp Travis, Brooks and Kelly Fields, and a U. S. Arsenal are established in or near the city and the headquarters of the Eighth Corps Area, which embraces the Southern Department, are at Fort Sam Houston. The spacious parade grounds of Fort Sam Houston have been the scene of many



CLOCK TOWER—FORT SAM HOUSTON

maneuvers, some of which were observed by Presidents Harrison, McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft, while the old tower clock in the quadrangle has served as a beacon light and curfew to thousands of Uncle Sam's soldier boys while far from their home towns.

THE ALAMO CITY

San Antonio is called "The Alamo City" and when its history and traditions are taken into account, no other name is so appropriate.

It is fitting that the Alamo should lend its name to this delightful city of the Southland; for San Antonio has grown to be a pride of the nation and has won an enviable place in the ranks of America's modern cities. It possesses all the natural charm and physical advantages requisite to the accomplishment of even far greater civic attainment.

The people of San Antonio take pride in the heritage of their Modern City with its skyscrapers, its factories, railroads and industries, its splendid schools and towering churches; but they cherish the memory of her primitive achievements, the recollections of the days when the savage lurked about and common danger brought the people close together for the protection of home and liberty.

San Antonio has an identity all her own. She resembles, in her picturesque setting, a number of the old world capitals. Like Rome, she is enthroned upon commanding hills, and, like Vienna, her view embraces verdure-clad



THE WINDING RIVER

eminences along the farther horizon. The winding San Antonio River has its rise in Brackenridge Park and wends its serpentine way through the heart of the city, as though spelling out in script the city's name.

The position of San Antonio is not only entrancingly beautiful, but is highly strategic. It is the only city in the Republic that has had to stand a series of military sieges, for the purely military reason that the army which holds San Antonio retains control over a region larger than France or Austria. It is not,



THE ALAMO CITY

therefore, accidental that the Spanish, Mexican, Texan and United States regular army forces have been quartered in their turn, in San Antonio, nor that the only complete American army division now has its permanent station there.

Cities, strategic in their location and having natural defensive elements, become populous world capitals in spite of themselves, if surrounded by a region capable of sustaining a large population. The fertile, tillable empire, watered by many rivers that empty into the Rio Grande or directly into the Gulf of Mexico, over which San Antonio reigns as a me-

tropolis, is capable of immense production and has a mineral, oil, and natural gas supply greater than any country in Europe.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the Tejas Indians pitched their little village on the present site of San Antonio before the Spanish advance began, or that the Padres of the Roman Catholic Church abandoned the temporary missions set up in other portions of the Southwest in order to build the solid stone and highly decorated permanent mission buildings, in and near San Antonio, which have come down through more than two centuries of the nation's history.

The future of the Alamo City is a thing to conjure with, for even though San Antonio is today the largest city in the broad expanse between St. Louis and the City of Mexico, from north to south, and between New Orleans and Los Angeles, from east to west, students of population growth point out that San Antonio, apart from her healthful and scenic situation, apart from her absorbing historical record, is destined to be one of the largest and most progressive cities in America.

